GREAT GERMAN SHORT STORIES

Edited by

Lewis Melville

&

Reginald Hargreaves

LONDON
ERNEST BENN LIMITED



First Published in
1929
Printed in
GREAT BRITAIN

PREFACE

To trace the history of the German short story is, broadly speaking, to make profound acquaintance with the age-long history of Folk-lore. In a nation one of whose most salient characteristics is a strongly marked sentimentality both in their religious, as in their daily, life this is only to be expected.

To a very large extent the earlier writers were doctrinaires, using the fiction form in which to enwrap their homilies, as the heavily stressed *moral*, so characteristic of the mass of their earlier work, clearly demonstrates. Theirs never to miss the opportunity to "point the moral, and adorn the tale." From the early, traditional legends of the Niblungen-lied onwards, this "hall-mark" of a national outlook persists unbroken from one generation to another. That many of the earlier writers were content with a variation of treatment on a common theme is demonstrated by the persistence with which the Faust legend appears in one guise or another.

A virile race withal, their "moralities" arrive not unaccompanied with the clash of arms and the stern echo of knightly deeds of derring-do, while their descriptive abilities, the ingenious play of their fancy, and their imaginative use of the powers of "magic," have rarely been equalled, and never excelled, in the literature of any country.

As to what actually constitutes a "short story," the modern view differs considerably from that held by the early German writer, whose "full measure, pressed down, and running over" exceeds by many a thousand words the conception of the short story held to-day. To this exuberant industry

must be attributed the absence of many characteristic examples which might have otherwise been included.

The decline or rise of a nation's entity is inevitably reflected in its literary output. National prosperity is the fruitful soil from which the finest crop of literary effort is culled. In its hour of depression, a nation's creative art, of necessity, suffers temporary stultification. Incidentally, the perfervid patriotism begot of oppression is more likely to find expression in flaming verse than in the colder medium of prose; and the lyric outbursts of her poets, rather than the pens of her novelists, voiced the sense of nationality and rebellion during the long years of Germany's suppression under the Napoleonic dominance.

A problem that has confronted the Editors of this book is presented by the existence of a number of authors whose natural medium of expression is the German language, but whose origin, in a pedantic sense, is not purely Germanic. Of such Gottfried Keller is a specific example. Viewing the problem in the wider sense, the aim in this volume has been to include examples of the works of all such writers whose stories—despite the actual nationality that governed their authors' birth—have been, both in essence and expression, essentially Teutonic.

A race of sentimentalists is rarely a race of humorists, so that in any selection of German short stories the lighter side can hope for little representation.

1929.

LEWIS MELVILLE.
REGINALD HARGREAVES.

CONTENTS

PAGE

PREFACE v

ANONYMOUS:

Old Hildebrand 13
(Translated by William Taylor,)

The Fall of the Nibelungs 15
(Translated by Margaret Armour)

GOTTFRIED VON STRASSBOURG (died *circa* 1210):

Tristan and Iseult 25
(Translated by Jessie L. Weston)

ANONYMOUS:

Reynard the Fox 59
(Translated by Thomas Roscoe)

Howleglass 72
(Translated by Thomas Roscoe.)

Dr. Faustus 78
(Translated by Thomas Roscoe.)

HEINRICH VON KLEIST (1715–1759):

The Marquise von O—— 83
(Translated by Henry Roche.)

KARL FRIEDRICH HIERONYSMUS, BARON VON MUENCHAUSEN (1720–1797).

"Koenigsmark," the Robber; or, the Terror of Bohemia . 122
(Related by Rudolf Erick Raspe.)

JOHANN AUGUST MUSÆUS (1735–1787):

Dumb Love 165
(Translated by Thomas Carlyle.)

SALOMON GESSNER (1730–1788):

A Scene from the Deluge 233
(Translated by William Taylor.)

JOHANN AUGUST EBERHARDT:

The Bet 237
(Translated by Thomas Roscoe.)

PAGE

JOHANN WOLFGANG VON GOETHE (1749–1832):
(i) The Good Women 250
(ii) A Fairy Tale 276
(Translated by R. D. Boylan.)

"OTMAR":

LOCAL POPULAR TRADITIONS FROM THE SOUTH SIDE OF THE HARTZ:
Jacob Nimmernuchtern, or, Jacob of the Bowl . . . 312

LOCAL POPULAR TRADITIONS FROM THE GOLDEN GREEN:
(i) The Knights' Cellar in the Kyffhäusen . . 328
(ii) Peter Klaus the Goatherd 332
(Translated by Thomas Roscoe.)

POPULAR LOCAL TRADITIONS FROM THE NORTH SIDE OF THE HARTZ:
The Monk of Conradsburg's Tale 336

AUGUST FRIEDRICH ERNST LANGBEIN (1757–1835):
Seven Marriages and Never a Husband . . 342
(Translated by Thomas Roscoe.)

JOHANN CHRISTOPH FRIEDRICH VON SCHILLER (1759–1805):
(i) The Criminal, or, Martyr to Lost Honour: a True Story 370
(ii) The Sport of Destiny 396
(Translated by Thomas Roscoe.)

MORITZ ERDMANN ENGEL (born 1767).
(i) The Anti-Speculator . . . 409
(ii) Toby Wilt 417
(Translated by Thomas Roscoe.)

CASPAR FRIEDRICH GOTTSCHALCK (born 1772):
Notburga 424
(Translated by Thomas Roscoe.)

LUDWIG TIECK (1773–1853):
(i) Auburn Egbert 431
(Translated by Thomas Roscoe.)
(ii) The Elves 452
(Translated by Thomas Carlyle.)

JOHANN HEINRICH DANIEL ZSCHOKKE (1770–1848):
The Inn at Cransac 475
(Translated by M. A Faber.)

ERNST THEODOR WILHELM HOFFMANN (1776–1822):
The History of Krakatuk 513
(Translated by William Makepeace Thackeray.)

PAGE

FRIEDRICH HEINRICH KARL, BARON DE LA MOTTE FOUQUÉ (1777–1843):
(i) Headmaster Rhenfried and his Family . . 527
(Translated by Thomas Roscoe.)
(ii) ASLAUGA'S KNIGHT 554
(Translated by Thomas Carlyle.)

LUDWIG ACHIM VON ARNIM (1781–1837):
The Mad Veteran of Fort Ratonneau . . . 594
(Translated by William Metcalfe)

ADELBERT VON CHAMISSO (1781–1838):
Peter Schlemihl 618

JOHANN GUSTAV BUSCHING (1783–1829):
History of Count Walter and the Lady Helgunda . 677
(Translated by Thomas Roscoe)

JACOB LUDWIG GRIMM (1785–1863) and WILHELM KARL GRIMM (1786–1859):
(i) The Twelve Dancing Princesses . . 684
(ii) The Domestic Goblin Hütchen . . 688
(iii) The Familiar of the Mill 694
(iv) Hildegard 697
(Translated by Thomas Roscoe)

OTTO KARL VON GRAEVEN ("LOTHAR") (born 1790)
(i) The Arch Rogue 700
(ii) Castle Christburg 707
(Translated by Thomas Roscoe)

THEODOR KÖRNER (1791–1813):
(i) The Harp: a Story of the Spirit World . 713
(Translated by Dora Footman.)
(ii) The Journey to Schandau: a Story in Letters . . 717
(Translated by Joan Clement Scott)
(iii) The Rocks of Hans Heiling (A Bohemian Legend) . 731
(Translated by Dora Footman)

ANONYMOUS:
The Sisters (published in 1817) 745
(Translated by Robert Pearse Gillies)

HEINRICH HEINE (1800–1856):
(i) The Rabbi of Bacharach 766
(Translated by Charles Godfrey Leland ["Hans Breitmann."])

PAGE

HEINRICH HEINE—*continued.*

(ii) From the Memoirs of Herr von Schnabelewopski: a Fragment 808
(Translated by S. L. Fleishman.)

WILHELM HAUFF (1802–1827):

The Cold Heart 824
(Translated by M A Faber.)

FRIEDRICH GERSTACKER (1816–1872):

Germelshausen 872
(Translated by C. W. Bell, M.A.)

THEODOR W. STORM (1817–1888):

Immensee 906
(Translated by C. W. Bell, M.A.)

GOTTFRIED KELLER (1819–1890):

The Naughty Saint Vitalis 943
(Translated by Martin Wyness.)

PAUL HEYSE (born 1830).

L'Arrabiata 965
(Translated by Mary Wilson.)

HERMANN SUDERMANN (1857–1928):

Autumn 987
(Translated by Ludwig Lewisohn.)

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The Editors express their grateful appreciation of the courtesy that has been extended to them:

Miss M. W. Malcolm Wood: for permission to print a portion of Miss Jessie L. Weston's translation of "Tristan and Iseult";

Messrs. J. M. Dent & Sons, Ltd.: for permission to print an extract from "The Fall of the Nibelungs," translated by Miss Margaret Armour, published in the "Everyman Library";

Messrs. Gowans & Gray, Ltd.: for permission to print "The Mad Veteran of Fort Ratonneau," by Ludwig Achim von Arnim, translated by Mr. William Metcalfe, from "The Twelve Best Short Stories in the German Language"; and "The Naughty Saint Vitalis," by Gottfried Keller, translated by Mr. Martin Wyness, from the volume of Keller short stories entitled "The Seven Legends";

Messrs. George G. Harrap & Company, Ltd.: for permission to print "Immensee," by Theodor Storm, and "Germelshausen," by Friedrich Gerstäcker, both translated by Mr. C. W. Bell, M.A., and included in their Bilingual Series, edited by Mr. J. E. Mansion;

Messrs. William Heinemann, Ltd.: for permission to print "The Rabbi of Bacharach," by Heinrich Heine, translated by Charles Godfrey Leland ("Hans Breitmann"), from "The Works of Heinrich Heine"; and

Messrs. John Lane, The Bodley Head, Ltd.: for permission to print "Autumn," by Hermann Sudermann, translated by Mr. Ludwig Lewisohn, M.A., from "The Indian Lily and Other Stories."

GREAT GERMAN SHORT STORIES

OLD HILDEBRAND

(*Early Ninth Century*)

(Translated by WILLIAM TAYLOR)

I HAVE heard say that Hildebrand and Amelung agreed to go on a warlike expedition. These kinsmen made ready their horse, prepared their war-shirts, and girded on their chain-hilted swords.

As they rode to the meeting of heroes, Hildebrand, Herbrand's son (he was one of the wise, and questioned in a few words), said to his companion; "If thou wilt tell me who was my father, and of what people thou art sprung, I will give thee three garments."

"I am a child of the Huns," answered Amelung, "and our old people have told me that my father's name was Hildebrand. In former times he came from the east, flying the enmity of Otto-asa, and put himself with Theodoric and his blades.

"He left behind, in the land, a bride in child-bed, and a child without inheritance; and went to the south with Theodoric, where he stood many brunts.

"He was a man without connections, not a match for Otto-asa; but he was a good soldier, while he strove under Theodoric, acquired domains, was his people's father, and dear to brave men. I do not believe that he is living."

"My worthy god Irmin in heaven above," quoth Hildebrand, "do not let me fight with so near a kinsman."

Then he untwisted golden bracelets from his arm, and imperial rings which his king had given him, saying: "This I give thee not without goodwill; I am thy father, Hildebrand."

Amelung answered: "With willing souls be gifts taken, tit for tat. Thou art not of his age. Craftily thou seekest to deceive me; but I will convict thee out of thine own mouth. Thou art so advanced in years, that thou must be older than he. And shipwrecked men told me that he died by the Wendel-sèa, in the west."

Then Hildebrand: "I well see thou hast in thy breast no Lord God, and carest nought for his kingdom. Go now, so God be willing," said Hildebrand. "I would we were parted. Sixty summers have I wandered out of my country, and sometimes I have joined archers; but in no borough did they ever fasten my legs, and now my nearest kinsman would aim his battle-axe at my neck, or I must bind up his legs. Yet you may now easily, if your valour is up, win the spoils of the dead from one you should venerate, if you have any sense of right. He would be a base Ostrogoth," continued Hildebrand, "who should refuse thee battle, seeing thou so greatly desirest it. Good commoners, be judges which it is who flinches in the field, and which it is who ought to have our two coats of mail."

Then they let fly their ashen spears with such force that they stuck in the shields. Then they struck together their stone-axes, and uplifted hostilely their white shields, till their loins and bellies quivered.

But the lady Utta rushed in between them: "I know," said she, "the cross of gold I gave him for his shield, this is my Hildebrand. You, Amelung, sheathe your sword, this is your father."

Then she led both champions into her hall, and gave them meat and wine and many embraces.

THE FALL OF THE NIBELUNGS

(Late Twelfth Century)

HOW SIEGFRIED JOURNEYED TO HIS OWN KINGDOM OF THE NIBELUNGS

(Translated by MARGARET ARMOUR)

SIEGFRIED hasted thence in his *Tarnkappe* to the haven on the shore, where he found a ship, the which he boarded secretly, and rowed it swiftly, as it had been blown by the wind. None saw the boatman. He made it fly with his great strength. Any that marked it deemed it driven by a tempest, but it was by Siegfried, fair Sieglind's child.

A day and a night brought him to a great country that an hundred days' journey could not compass; this hight the Nibelung land, where he had his vast treasure.

The hero landed alone on a broad meadow, and moored the ship. Then he went to a mountain, whereon a castle stood, and asked for lodging, as he had been a way-weary man. He went up to the door, that stood locked before him. For folk guarded their honour then, even as now. The stranger began to knock at the bolted door, and encountered within a huge giant that kept watch, and that had his weapons ever by him. And this giant said, "Who knocketh so loud on that door?"

Siegfried answered with a feigned voice, "I am a knight. Open to me, else I will rouse some within that had willingly lain soft abed."

The porter was wroth at Siegfried's word. He did on his armour, and put his helmet on his head, and grasped his shield, and swung open the door. Then he ran grimly at Siegfried, saying, "How durst thou waken so many brave men?" And he smote him hard and swift. The noble stranger made wary fence, but the porter lifted an

iron bar and brake his shield-band. Then the hero came in scathe, and began to fear grim death when the porter smote so hard. Yet his master loved him the more for his daring.

They strove so fiercely that the castle rang, and the din thereof was heard in the hall of the Nibelungs. But Siegfried overcame the porter at last, and bound him And the news spread through the Nibelung land.

Albric, a bold and savage dwarf, heard their strife from far off through the mountain. He did on his armour straightway, and ran where he found the stranger, that had made an end of binding the giant. Now Albric was bold and stout, and on his body he had a helmet and coat of mail, and in his hand a heavy scourge of gold. He hasted and fell on Siegfried. The scourge had seven heavy knobs hanging from it, wherewith he smote so heavily to the left upon the shield that he well-nigh brake it. Then the noble guest came in peril. He threw away the broken shield and stuck his long sword into the sheath, for he would not slay his chamberlain, but ever spared his own folk; wherein he did honourably. With his strong hands he ran at Albric, and grasped the age-hoary man by the beard, and shook him sore, that he yelled aloud. Certes, the young hero's handling was dolorous enow to Albric, who cried out, "Spare me. Had I not sworn fealty to a knight already, I would serve thee till I died." This he spake craftily. Siegfried bound Albric as he had done to the giant, and the dwarf was in evil case through Siegfried's strength, and asked, "What is thy name?"

Siegfried answered, "Siegfried is my name. Methought thou hadst known me."

"Right glad am I to hear it," said Albric, the dwarf, "for now I know, by thy prowess, that thou art worthy to be the lord of this land, and I will do all thy behest, if thou spare my life."

Said Siegfried then, "Haste and bring me a thousand

Nibelung knights, of the best we have. I would see them here before me. Thou hast naught to fear at my hand." He loosed the giant and Albric, and Albric ran to the knights, and waked them eagerly, and said, "Rouse ye, O heroes, and go to Siegfried."

They sprang from their beds and were ready on the instant, a thousand good knights and rich attired. They went where Siegfried stood, and he greeted them fair. They lit many tapers, and poured for him the spiced draught. And he thanked them that they had not lingered, and said, "Ye shall follow me hence across the sea;" whereto he found the good knights willing.

Full thirty thousand warriors were come at his bidding, and from these he chose a thousand of the best. And some brought them their helmets, and some their coats of mail, for they had to follow Siegfried into Brunhild's land. He said then, "Hearken, good knights; ye go to court, and must have rich apparel, for ye shall be seen of fair women. Wherefore array you in your best."

Now a fool might say, "Thou liest. How could so many knights dwell together? Where find the meat, and where the vesture? It were not possible, if Siegfried had thirty lands." But ye have heard that Siegfried was rich, for the kingdom and the hoard of the Nibelungs were his. Wherefore his knights had enow and to spare, for the hoard grew never less for all that he took from it.

They rose up early in the morning (doughty followers had Siegfried won!), and took good horses with them, and sumptuous apparel, and departed proudly for Brunhild's land.

Many beautiful maidens gazed from the windows there, and the queen said, "Do any of you know who they be, that I behold yonder, afar off on the waves? Their sails are rich and whiter than the snow."

The King of Rhineland answered, "They are my men, that I left some little way behind when I journeyed hither. I summoned them, and now, Queen, they are here."

They welcomed the noble guests courteously. Siegfried stood in the prow of the vessel, richly clad, and many warriors beside him.

The queen said, "Tell me, O King, shall I greet the guests, or no?"

He answered, "Go out now before the castle. So shall they see that they are welcome." And the queen did as he counselled her, and greeted Siegfried before any. And they lodged them, and took their arms in charge.

Now so many guests were in the land that they were pressed for room, and the Burgundians were eager to be home.

Then said the queen, "I would thank him that would distribute for me, among mine and the king's guests, the gold and silver that I have in plenty."

Dankwart, bold Giselher's man, answered, "Noble Queen, give me the key, and I will so divide it that, if there be any shame, it shall be mine only."

None could deny that he gave freely. When Hagen's brother held the key, he bestowed costly gifts without stint. Whoso desired a mark received so much that the poorest was rich his life long. Pounds, by the hundred, he gave uncounted, and many an one went forth from the hall richly dight, that never afore had worn so fair vesture.

They told it to the queen, who was wroth, and said, "I would know, King, wherefore thy chamberlain leaveth me naught of my apparel, and spendeth all my gold. I would thank him that stayed his hand. He giveth as he thought I had summoned Death hither. But I trust to live yet a while, and can spend for myself, I trow, what my father left me."

Never had queen so lavish a chamberlain.

But Hagen of Trony made answer, "Know, Lady, that the King of the Rhine hath gold and raiment to give in plenty, nor needeth to bear aught of Brunhild's hence."

"Nay, if thou lovest me," said the queen, "let me fill

twenty travelling chests with gold and with silk, that my hand may have somewhat to bestow when we get home to the land of Burgundy."

They filled the chests with precious stones. Her own chamberlain saw to it, for she would not trust Giselher's man. And Gunther and Hagen began to laugh.

Then the queen said, "To whom shall I leave my kingdom? Thy hand and mine must establish that or we depart."

The king answered, "Call forth whom thou wilt, and he shall be regent."

The lady saw her nearest of kin standing nigh her—her mother's brother—and to him she said, "Take my castles and my land in charge, till that King Gunther's own hand holdeth rule here."

She chose from among her knights two thousand men to follow her to the Rhine, and the thousand Nibelung warriors. Then she made ready for the journey, and rode down to the shore. She took with her six and eighty women, and an hundred fair damsels, and they tarried not longer, but set out. They that were left behind wept sore! Graciously and sweetly the lady quitted her land. She kissed her nearest of kin that stood round. With loving farewells they reached the sea. To the land of her fathers the maiden returned nevermore.

Many hands made music during the voyage, and they had all manner of pastime, and a favouring wind. And so they sailed away; and many a mother's son wept for it.

Brunhild wedded not the king on the voyage, but waited for a hightide that was to be held in the castle of Worms; and thither they speeded merrily with their knights.

HOW SIEGFRIED WAS SENT TO WORMS

WHEN they had journeyed full nine days, Hagen of Trony said, "Hearken to my word. We have delayed too long

to send the news to Worms on the Rhine. The envoys should have been in Burgundy or now."

King Gunther answered, "Thou sayest sooth. And none were better for this business than thyself, friend Hagen. Ride now into my land, for thou art the fittest to tell of our coming."

"Nay, certes, dear master, I am but a bad envoy. Let me stay here at sea and act the chamberlain. I will look to the women's wardrobe, till we bring them to Burgundy. Bid Siegfried rather carry the message: by reason of his great strength he will bear it through well. If he deny thee, urge him with friendly words, that he do it for thy sister's sake."

So Gunther sent for the knight, who came when they had found him. And the king said, "We are well-nigh home in my land. It is time I sent a messenger to tell my dear sister and my mother that we draw near. Undertake thou the journey, and I will owe thee much thanks."

But Siegfried would not do it till that Gunther had begged him and said, "Ride not for my sake only, but for fair Kriemhild's, that the royal maiden requite it, even as I." And when Siegfried heard that, he yielded.

"Command what thou wilt, I will not gainsay it. I will do it for the sake of my beautiful lady. How should I deny aught to her that I bear in my heart? Because of her, I will perform all that thou askest."

"Tell Uta, then, the great queen, that we have prospered in our adventure; and let my brothers hear how that it hath fared well with us. Tell the same news to our friends. And hide nothing from my sister. Greet her from Brunhild and me; greet also the courtiers and all my men. Say to them that I have gotten the desire of my heart. And bid Ortwin, my dear nephew, raise seats by the Rhine. Make it known also to the other knights that I will hold a great hightide with Brunhild; and bid my sister, when she heareth I am at hand with my guests,

prepare a fair welcome for my bride; for the which I shall ever be beholden to her."

So Siegfried took leave of Brunhild, as was meet, and rode to the Rhine. In the whole world was no better envoy.

With twenty and four knights he rode to Worms. And when it was noised abroad that he was come without the king, Gunther's servants were heavy of their cheer, for they feared that their lord had tarried behind, dead.

The messengers sprang gaily from their horses, and Giselher, the young king, ran to them, and Gernot, his brother, who cried quickly, when he saw not King Gunther with Siegfried, "Thou art welcome, Sir Siegfried. Tell me, now, what thou hast done with my brother the king. If the strength of Brunhild hath reft him from us, a bitter wooing hath it been."

"Fear naught. Thee and his kinsmen my friend greeteth by me, for he hath sent me hither to you with news. Contrive now that I come to the queen and thy sister. For I am charged with the same message to them as to thee, from Gunther and Brunhild: that it standeth well with the twain."

Giselher said, "Go in to them straightway, and it will please my sister. She feareth for my brother; by my troth, she will see thee gladly."

Siegfried answered, "If I can serve her in aught, it shall be done. Where are now the ladies, that I may go to them?"

Giselher, the brave youth, bare the message; he said to his mother and his sister, "Siegfried is come to us, the hero of the Netherland. My brother Gunther hath sent him hither to the Rhine. He bringeth us word how it standeth with the king. Allow him to come to the court, for he bringeth news from Issland."

The noble women were heavy of their cheer. They ran for their robes, and arrayed them, and bade Siegfried to

the court; and he went gladly, for he yearned to see them. Kriemhild, the noble maiden, greeted him fair.

"Thou art welcome, Sir Siegfried, valiant knight. Where is my brother Gunther, the noble king? I fear we have lost him by Brunhild's strength. Alack! that ever I was born!"

But the warrior answered, "Give me the guerdon of good news, for, fair women, ye weep without cause. I left him safe and sound—I say sooth—and he hath charged me with a message. He and his wife commend them lovingly to thee, O Queen. Dry thine eyes, for they will be here shortly."

Kriemhild had not heard such good news for many a day. She wiped her bright eyes with her snow-white apron, and began to thank the envoy for his message.

So ended her sorrow and her tears.

She bade Siegfried sit, whereto he was nothing loth, and said sweetly, "I would fain give thee the envoy's guerdon, wert thou not too rich to receive it. Take my good will in lieu thereof."

"Though I had thirty lands," answered Siegfried, "I were proud to take a gift from thy hand."

Kriemhild said, "Be it so." And she bade the chamberlain fetch the envoy's meed. She gave him four and twenty bracelets with precious stones for his fee. The hero would not keep them: he was too rich a prince, but gave them to the maidens that were in the chamber.

Uta, also, greeted him fair, and he said, "I must tell thee further what the king would have thee do when he cometh to the Rhine; for the which, if thou grant it, he will ever be beholden to thee. He would have thee receive his noble guests kindly, and ride out from Worms to the shore to meet them. He begged this of thee with true heart."

The beautiful maiden answered, "I will do it gladly. I will deny him no service. Faithfully and truly will I do it." And she grew red from love.

Never was prince's envoy better entreated. If she had durst kiss him, she had done it readily. In loving wise he took leave of the maiden.

Then did the Burgundians as Siegfried told them. Sindolt, and Hunolt, and Rumolt the knight, hasted and raised seats on the strand before Worms. The king's servants rested not. And Ortwin and Gary sent messengers out straightway to Gunther's liegemen over all, with news of the hightide. The maidens looked to their apparel. The palace and all the walls were decked out for the guests, and adorned cunningly for the stranger knights.

All the roads were thronged with the kinsmen of the three kings, that had been summoned to welcome Gunther and Brunhild, and many a rich vest was taken from its wrapping-cloth. Then the news spread, that Brunhild's friends had been spied on the way. And great was the press in Burgundy. Bold knights, enow, I ween, were there on both sides!

Fair Kriemhild said, "Go now, you of my maidens that will forth with me to the welcome, and seek out your best clothes from the chests, that we may have honour and praise from the guests."

The knights also bade bring out rich saddles, all of red gold, for the women to ride from Worms down to the Rhine. Better riding gear there could not be. Ha! how bright the gold shone on the horses, and the precious stones on the bridles! They brought out gilded side-saddles and goodly trappings for the women. And they were all merry of their cheer.

The horses stood ready in the court for the noble maidens, as I have told you, and the poitrals were of the finest silk that was ever spun. Eighty and six dames in head-coifs, fair, and dight in rich apparel, came to Kriemhild, and thereto, featly adorned, many a beautiful damsel; fifty and four, the fairest in Burgundy, with glittering lace over their yellow hair. All that the king had desired of them

they did with good will. Fair robes of goodly stuffs that matched their white skins they wore before the stranger knights. None but a fool had found any of them amiss. Some had mantles of sable and ermine, and their arms and wrists had bracelets over the silk; none might tell all the goodly show to the end. With girdles cunningly fashioned, rich and long, they bound their gorgeous robes made of silk of Araby. The world held no fairer damsels. In their tightened bodices they laced them deftly. Certes, they had been grieved if their red cheeks had not outshone their vesture. Never queen had lovelier maidens.

When now the women had done on their apparel, the proud warriors that were to lead them out drew nigh, a mighty force, bearing shields and ashen spears.

GOTTFRIED VON STRASSBOURG

(Died *circa* 1210)

[Tristan and Iseult, which comes down to us with all the dignity and impressiveness of its remote, Saga origins, has known many adaptations That of the above author is admittedly amongst the best, and while of too great length to include in its entirety, is typified in the following "adventure."]

TRISTAN AND ISEULT

(Translated by Jessie L. Weston)

Now the marshal of the King of Ireland, under whose care both town and haven lay, came down in full armour, with a body of men, as the decree bade him, that he might ask of all new-comers to the haven if they were from King Mark's land or no, and if they were, to put them to death. When Tristan saw them he put on such a hood as a man might wear on a journey, that his face might be the better hidden, and took a cup of red gold, worked in the English fashion, and entered a little boat, with Kurwenal to row him, and made for the shore, greeting them with courteous gestures.

When the folk saw the boat they all ran together, shouting, "To land! to land!"

Tristan put into the harbour, and said, "Good folk, what mean this roughness and these threatening gestures? I know not what I have done amiss. If there be any one in authority here I pray that he will speak with me."

"Yes," said the marshal, "here am I, and I must needs know whence ye come and whither ye go?"

"Of a sooth," said Tristan, "an thou wilt bid this folk

keep silence so that I may be heard, I will tell thee mine errand gladly." And when they were silent, he went on, "Sir, we are merchants, I and my fellows, and come from Normandy. Our wives and children are with us in the ship, and we go hither and thither, from land to land, buying such things as we have need of. Within this thirty days I and two other merchants set sail to go to Spain, and about an eight days agone a storm arose which separated us, and drave me northwards. I know not how the others have fared, whether they be living or dead; I had much ado to escape with my life. Yesterday at noon the wind fell, and I knew the look of the coast, so came hither to rest me. And at daybreak I made for Whiteford, for I know the town, and have been here aforetime with merchants. But if this folk will not be at peace with me I must perforce set sail again, though I have much need of rest. Yet if thou wilt let me land, then what good fortune I may find I will freely share with thee, that I and mine may remain in peace while I seek my friends ashore, and see if I may here do some trading. Bid thy men be at peace, for they are all putting off in boats, wherefore I know not. Otherwise, I go back to my men, and fear ye all not one straw."

Then the marshal bade his men return to land, and said to the stranger, "What will ye give the King if I protect your lives and goods in this land?"

"Sir, whatever our gains may be, I will give a mark of red gold for each day we sojourn in this land; and thou thyself shalt have this golden cup, if indeed thou art able to assure me of safety."

"Yea," said they all, "that can he, for he is the King's marshal."

Then he gave them the cup, and the marshal thought it a rich and precious gift, and bade him come ashore, and sware that he and his should be in peace and surety. And for that did they win rich payment in royal red gold; red gold for the King's tribute, red gold for the messenger's

fee—and 'twas good too for Tristan, since it won him peace and favour.

Now, the story tells us that there was at that time in Ireland a monstrous dragon which devoured the people and wasted the land; so that the King at last had sworn a solemn oath that whoever slew the monster should have the Princess Iseult to wife; and because of the beauty of the maiden and the fierceness of the dragon many a valiant knight had lost his life. The land was full of the tale, and it had come to Tristan's ears, and in the thought of this had he made his journey.

The next morning, ere it was light, he rose and armed himself secretly, and took his strongest spear, and mounted his steed and rode forth into the wilderness. He rode by many a rough path till the sun was high in the heavens, when he turned downwards into a valley, where as the geste tells us, the dragon had his lair. Then he saw afar off four men galloping swiftly over the moor where there was no road. One of them was the Queen's seneschal, who would fain have been the lover of the Princess Iseult, but she liked him not. Whenever knights rode forth bent on adventures the seneschal was ever with them, for nothing on earth save that men might say they had seen him ride forth, for never would he face the dragon, but would return swifter than he went.

Now, when Tristan saw the men in flight he knew the dragon must be near at hand, so he rode on steadily, and ere long he saw the monster coming towards him, breathing out smoke and flame from his open jaws. The knight laid his spear in rest, and set spurs to his steed, and rode so swiftly, and smote so strongly, that the spear went in at the open jaws, and pierced through the throat into the dragon's heart, and he himself came with such force against the dragon that his horse fell dead, and he could scarce free himself from the steed. But the evil beast fell upon the corpse and partly devoured it, till the wound from the spear

pained so sorely that it left the horse half eaten and fled into a rocky ravine.

Tristan followed after the monster, which fled before, roaring for pain till the rocks rang again with the sound. It cast fire from its jaws and tare up the earth around, till the pain of the wound overcame it, and it crouched down under a wall of rock. Then Tristan drew forth his sword, thinking to slay the monster easily, but 'twas a hard strife, the hardest Tristan had ever fought, and in truth he thought it would be his death. For the dragon had as aid smoke, flame, teeth and claws sharper than a shearing-knife, and the knight had much ado to find shelter behind the trees and bushes, for the fight was so fierce that the shield he held in his hand was burnt well-nigh to a coal. But the conflict did not endure over-long, for the spear in the vitals of the dragon began to pain him so that he lay on the ground, rolling over and over in agony. Then Tristan came near swiftly, and smote with his sword at the heart of the monster so that the blade went in right to the hilt; and the dragon gave forth a roar so grim and terrible that it was as if heaven and earth fell together, and the death-cry was heard far and wide through the land. Tristan himself was well-nigh terrified, but as he saw the beast was dead, he went near, and with much labour he forced the jaws open, and cut out the tongue, then he closed the jaws again, and put the tongue in his bosom. He turned him again to the wilderness, thinking to rest through the day and come again to his people secretly in the shadows of the night; but he was so overcome by the stress of the fight and the fiery breath of the dragon that he was well-nigh spent, and seeing a little lake near at hand into which a clear stream flowed from the rock, he went towards it, and as he came to the cool waters the weight of his armour and the venom of the dragon's tongue overpowered him, and he fell senseless.

But the seneschal, who would fain be the Princess's lover,

as he rode homeward, heard the death-cry of the dragon, and bethought him what it might mean; he said to himself, "The beast is either dead or sorely wounded; now is my chance if I work warily." So he stole away from his companions, and rode quietly down a hill to the valley, then he turned his bridle towards the place whence the sound came, and rode swiftly till he found the carcase of Tristan's horse, and there he halted, for his heart misgave him. Then as he heard and saw nothing, he took courage and rode, still fearful and trembling, along the track made by the grass and broken underwood, and ere he knew he came right on the dragon lying dead. Overcome by terror at the sight, he turned his bridle so swiftly that horse and man alike stumbled and fell over a little hillock, and when he sprang to his feet he was so terrified he durst not wait to remount, but fled on foot. But as he found the dragon did not move he took heart, and stole back trembling; he led the horse to a fallen trunk and remounted, and then rode with caution nearer to the dragon to see whether it were alive or dead. And when he saw that the monster was in truth dead, he cried aloud, "Now by God's grace I have come hither in a happy hour!"

With that he laid his lance in rest and rode gaily toward the dragon, crying, "Now art thou mine, my Lady Iseult!" and smote with such force that the spear went through the dragon's jaws, and remained there. This he did out of pure cunning, for he thought, "If the knight who has slain the dragon be living he will not be able to deny that I have aided him." Then he turned and sought all about to find the knight, for he thought if he were, as well might be, sorely wounded, then he could fight with him, and slay and bury him, and no man be aught the wiser. And when he found him not he said, "Well, let him go; whether he be living or dead I am the first here, and I have kinsmen and friends enow, so that if man would take the credit of this deed he shall but lose by it." So he rode back to the

dragon, and with his sword he gashed the carcase here and there. He had fain hewn off the head, but the neck was so thick he might not come at it. Then he took his spear, and brake it in two over the trunk of a tree, and stuck the pointed end in the monster's jaw, as if it had been broken in a joust.

Having thus as he deemed made all safe, he rode back to Whiteford and bade them go with a wagon and four horses to bring back the head of the dragon, and told every one what he had done, and the sore peril he had been in. "See, see," he cried, "what a man of brave heart and steadfast courage can do for the sake of the lady he loves. I marvelled, and marvel still, how I escaped the danger which beset me; had I been as soft as was another man I had never done it. I know not who he was, and adventurer, who for his cowardice, ere I came up, had met with an evil end. Both man and horse are dead and devoured; the horse still lies there half eaten. I have dared more for the love of a woman than ever a man before me!"

Then he called his friends together, and went again to the dragon, and bade them look again on the wonder, and bear testimony to what they saw. The head they cut off and brought again in the wagon, and he fixed a day for them to ride together with him to the Court, and claim the fulfilment of the King's promise.

Now the tale was speedily brought to Court, and told in the women's chambers, and never were tidings more unwelcome! To that fair maid Princess Iseult it was bitter as a death-blow; never had she seen a sadder day. But her mother spake, "Nay, sweet daughter, nay; let it not trouble thee so; we will see first whether this be truth or a lie. God forbid that the thing should be so! Weep not, my daughter; thy bright eyes should never be reddened for so small a grief!"

"Ah! Mother," said the maiden, "insult not thy birth and thyself; ere I be that man's wife I will thrust a knife

through my heart. Neither wife nor lady shall he have in Iseult, unless he have her dead."

"Nay, nay, fear not, sweet daughter; whatever the truth may be, thee has he lost, for if all the world were to swear it thou shouldst never wed the seneschal."

When the night fell the Queen wove cunning spells, the virtue of which she knew well, for her daughter's sorrow, so that in a dream she saw all the truth, and knew that the seneschal had dealt falsely; and as the day began to dawn she spake to Iseult, "Daughter, art thou waking?"

"Yes, Mother mine."

"Then let thine heart be at peace; I have good tidings for thee. The seneschal slew not the dragon. 'Twas a stranger knight—I know not what brought him hither—who did the deed. Come, let us go thither quickly, and we will see for ourselves how the truth may be. Brangoene, rise up softly and bid the squire Paranise saddle our horses; we must ride forth, we four, I and my daughter, thou and he. Bid him bring the horses as quickly as may be to the little postern where the orchard opens on to the moorland."

When all was ready the little company mounted, and rode to the spot where they had heard that the dragon was slain, and there they found first the carcase of the horse, and beheld the trappings, and knew that never in Ireland had they seen the like, and they said to each other that whoever the man might be who rode the horse, 'twas he and no other who slew the dragon. Then they rode further, and came on the monster as it lay, and it looked so grim and so ghastly in the dim morning light that the women grew pale with dread. The Queen said to her daughter: "Now of one thing I am sure: our seneschal never dared face that monster! We may lay aside all care; and, daughter, whether the man be living or dead, methinks he is hidden somewhere near by; let us go and seek him. God grant we may find him, and with his aid overcome the dread that oppresses thine heart."

heard the tale of the dragon, it came into my mind that, as the people were ill-disposed towards us, if I could but slay the monster I should find favour and peace in the sight of this folk."

"Favour and peace shalt thou have to dying day," quoth the Queen: "thou hast come hither in a happy hour for thyself and us. Ask whatever thou desirest of my lord and me, and it shall be done."

"I thank thee, lady. I should put myself and my ships in thy protection. I prithee let me not rue the day that I trusted life and goods to thy faith."

"Nay, forsooth, Tantris, have no care for thy life or thy goods: see, I give thee my hand upon it, that none shall touch thee or thine in Ireland as long as I live, and all thou askest of me will I do. But now I would take counsel with thee on a matter that nearly touches mine honour and my happiness."

With that she told of the seneschal, how he would fain lay claim to the Princess's hand, and how with lies and falsehood he made belief to have won her.

"Dear lady," said Tristan, "have no care. Thou hast given me back life and strength; both are at thy service to withstand all danger at thy will."

"God reward thee, Tantris. Gladly will I take thine aid, for if this thing should come to pass 'twould be the death of me and of my daughter Iseult."

"Have no fear, lady. But tell me, what of the tongue that was in my bosom? Didst thou leave it there, or what?"

"Nay, I have it here; my fair daughter Iseult and I, we brought all that belonged to thee with us."

"'Tis well," said Tristan. "Now, sweet Queen, trouble no more, but help me to my strength, and all shall go as thou desirest."

Meanwhile the comrades whom Tristan had left upon the ship were in much trouble and sorrow when he came

not again at the end of the three days, and they heard the tale of the dragon—how it had slain a stranger knight and his horse. They said, "Of a truth this must be Tristan; were he alive he had returned ere now." So they took counsel, and sent Kurwenal ashore that he might see the carcase of the horse; and when he came there he knew the steed and the trappings for Tristan's, but of Tristan himself there was no sign. He found the remains of the dragon, but not a sign of his lord's armour or of his raiment, and he knew not what to think. "Ah, Sir Tristan," he said, "art thou living or dead? Alas, Iseult, that the fame of thy beauty ever came to Cornwall, if it have brought so noble a knight to so evil a fate!"

Then he returned, weeping, to the ship, and told his comrades what he had seen, and they were sorrowful at the tidings, though, in their heart, some of them were not ill-pleased. Thus the twenty lords who had come with him were of one accord that they would wait his coming no longer, for they were in haste to be gone from Ireland, but the others would not listen to their counsel, but said they would not leave the land till they knew whether their lord was really dead, and that they would await him for at least two days longer, and the twenty lords must needs yield to their will.

Meanwhile the day had come that King Curmun had set for redeeming his pledge to the seneschal, and all the knights were gathered together for counsel, and the Queen had also come thither, for the King trusted much to her wisdom. And before the council he spake with her in secret. "What counsel canst thou give, my wife? For 'twere bitter as death to give our daughter to the seneschal."

"Be at peace," said the Queen. "That will we never do; I have well foreseen the matter."

"How, lady? Tell me quickly, that we may rejoice together."

"See thou, our seneschal never slew the dragon as he

saith, but I know well who did, and when the time is ripe I will declare the matter. Go thou to thy lords, and say that when thou art well assured of the truth of the seneschal's word thou wilt be ready to keep thine oath. Then sit thou on thy judgment-seat, and bid thy knights to judge with thee, and let the seneschal bring his plea, and say as he will, and when the time is ripe then will I come with Iseult, and will speak for thee, for her, and for myself. I will now seek her, and come again swiftly."

So the King went back to the palace and sat on his judgment-seat, with all the barons round him, and a great company of knights and nobles, for all were fain to know what should be the end of the matter. And when the Queen and Princess entered they said among themselves, "'Twere good fortune for the seneschal, who hath never had good fortune, to win such a maid as this! All men might well envy him."

Then the seneschal came forth and stood before the King, and Curmun arose, and said kindly, "Speak, what dost thou require of me?"

"Lord King," he answered, "I pray only that thine honour and thy plighted word be not broken. Thou didst swear that whosoever slew the dragon, to him wouldst thou give thy daughter Iseult to wife, and this oath of thine hath slain many. But I recked little, since I loved the maiden, and I risked my life more often and more valiantly than any man, till at length fortune befriended me, and I slew the monster. See there the head where it lies, I brought it for a token. Now fulfil thy pledge, for the King's word and the King's oath, they should be holy."

"Seneschal," said the Queen, "'tis too much, by my troth, to desire so rich a prize as my daughter Iseult, when thou hast not won it."

Quoth the seneschal, "Thou doest ill to speak thus, lady. My King, *he* shall decide. He can speak for himself; let him answer me."

. But the King said: "Lady, do thou speak for thyself, for Iseult, and for me."

"That will I, my lord. Seneschal, thy love may be true, and thou be a valiant man, worthy a woman's love; but he who claimeth a great reward which he hath never merited doeth ill, I trow. Thou hast taken to thyself a deed and a manhood that, as I am well advised, belong not to thee."

"Lady, I know not what thou sayest; I have here a proof of my words."

"Thou hast brought a head, so might another man if he thought to win Iseult by it; but she is not to be so lightly won."

"Nay," said the younger Iseult, "it needeth greater labour for my winning."

"Ah, Princess!" said the seneschal, "dost thou count as naught all the perils I have dared for love of thee?"

"That thou hast loved me may perchance be reckoned to thee for good, but I never loved thee, nor looked on *thee* with favour—nor shall I ever."

"Yea," said the seneschal, "I know well thou doest as all women do: they love those who hate them, and hate those who love them; the crooked they account straight, and the straight crooked. Love is the most uncertain game a man may play at, and he is but witless who risks his life for a woman, if he hold not a pledge from her first. And yet, whatever thou or my lady the Queen may say, the thing must go according to my word, or the King hath broken his oath."

But the Queen spake: "Seneschal, methinks thou knowest women so well thou hast become one of them, for see, thou thyself lovest one who hateth thee, and desirest one who will naught of thee. If that be but the way of women, why do even as they? Deal thou rather as a man, and love the maiden who loveth thee, and desire her who desireth thee. We have heard over-much of thy love for Iseult; she loveth

thee not, and that perchance she hath from me, for I loved thee never. And as for the King's oath, I tell thee thou didst never slay the dragon; another slew it; and if thou askest me, 'Who was he?' I answer that I know him, and will bring him hither at the fitting time."

"Lady, there is no man shall falsely deprive me of my right and my honour. If he lay claim to it, must he stake life and limb upon it, hand to hand, before this Court, ere I waive a tittle of my right."

"'Tis well," spake the Queen, "I will myself be his surety; the knight who slew the dragon will I bring hither on the second day from now."

Then the King and the council said, "'Tis enough, Seneschal. Go thou and take measures for the fight, and, my lady the Queen, do thou see to thy champion." Then the King took pledges from either side, and they made fast the fight for the third day.

So the Queen and the Princess went their way and told all to their minstrel, for by now Tristan's health and strength had come back to him; and the ladies looked upon him, and secretly they thought it a strange thing that one so fair in face and so noble in bearing should be but a wandering minstrel, seeking his bread from land to land; and they said between themselves, "'Twere more fitting that he should be a King and lord of some country; many a folk has a less king-like ruler. Of a sooth, his looks and his lot match each other but ill." The queen bade her squire Paranise look well to the knight's harness, and see that it was well polished and in fair order; and this he did and laid all the pieces together. Now, as chance would have it, the Princess came and looked on the armour as it lay, for her heart was heavy within her for the coming conflict, and she took up the sword and drew it out of the scabbard, and gazed on it long and earnestly, and as she did so her eyes fell on the splinter that was lacking. She thought within herself: "Now God help me! I ween that the splinter that should

be here is in my keeping." Then she ran to the casket wherein lay the splinter that her mother had drawn from Morolt's skull, and fetched it, and laid it on the blade, and lo! it fitted as if it were but one, as in truth it had been not two years back.

Then the maiden's heart grew cold within her, and her colour changed from red to white, and she said, "Ah, unhappy that I am! how came this fatal weapon hither from Cornwall? With this sword was my uncle Morolt surely slain, and 'twas Tristan slew him. Who gave it to the minstrel Tantris?" And as she thought, suddenly it was as if she saw the name before her, *Tantris*, *Tristan*, and she knew the one was but the other read backwards, and she cried aloud, "Ah! my heart forbode this falsehood and this treachery, for since I have looked upon him well and marked his face and bearing, I have known he must be of noble birth. But how dared he come hither with his deadly wound? And we have cherished and healed him! *Healed?* Nay, not yet, for this sword shall be his death! Hasten, Iseult, avenge thy wrongs. If he be slain with the sword that slew thine uncle thou hast repaid him well!"

Then she took the sword in both hands and ran swiftly to Tristan's chamber, and stood over him as he lay. "Yea," she said, "art thou *Tristan?*"

"Lady, nay, I am Tantris."

"That I know well—Tantris and Tristan they are but one traitor. The wrong Tristan did me shall be avenged on Tantris; thou must pay for my uncle's death."

"Nay, nay, sweetest lady. What wouldst thou do? Think of thine own honour and thy fair name. Thou art woman and maid. If men accuse thee of murder, thy beauty will be for ever dishonoured, the Sun of Ireland that rejoices so many hearts will have set. A sword becomes not those white hands!"

As he spake, the Queen, her mother, entered. "How now?" she cried. "What meaneth this? What doest

thou, my daughter? Are these womanly ways? Art thou beside thyself? What wouldest thou with that sword? Is this jest or anger?"

"Ah, lady Mother, 'tis our heart-sorrow. See, this is the murderer Tristan, who slew thy brother. Now may we avenge ourselves. Let us smite him with this sword. A better chance shall we never have."

"This *Tristan?* How dost thou know, daughter?"

"I know it well. He is Tristan. This sword is his; look well on it, and see here the splinter. See how the two fit together! As I laid one on the other I saw well they were but one blade."

"Ah!" cried the Queen, "Iseult, what hast thou told me? If this indeed be Tristan, then have I been sorely betrayed!"

Iseult lifted the sword again, and drew nearer. "Stay, Iseult, stay!" cried the Queen. "Dost thou remember how I am pledged to him?"

"I care not, he shall die."

"Mercy, fair Iseult!" quoth Tristan.

"No mercy shalt thou have, traitor!" said the maiden. "I will have thy life."

"Not so, daughter," said the mother. "We may not take vengeance on him lest we break our troth and our honour. He is under my protection, life and limb, with all that belongeth to him. I have taken him into my peace, come what may."

"I thank thee, lady," said the knight. "Forget not that I entrusted myself and all I had to thine honour; my life is in thy keeping."

"Thou liest!" said the maiden. "I know well what passed, and life and shelter did my mother never swear to *Tristan.*" With that she would have raised the sword again, but her mother stayed her hand. And in sooth even had Tristan been bound and alone with her she would scarce have slain him, for her womanhood fought hard with her

anger, till at length her gentle heart conquered, and she cast the sword from her, and fell a-weeping. "Alas!" she cried, "that ever I saw this day!"

But her mother said, "Daughter mine, thy sorrows are my sorrows, and even heavier are they for me. Morolt was my brother, nearer to me than thee, and he is dead. That was my sorest sorrow; but now I have another. I tremble for *thee*, daughter, and in that sorrow I forget the first; better one grief than two. How of that wretched man who claims thine hand? If we have no champion to overcome him, then thy father and I are dishonoured with thee, and may never more be joyful."

Then Tristan said, "Fair ladies both, it is true I have caused ye sorrow, yet it was forced upon me. If ye will, as ye may, remember it, then know I was in peril of death, and a man defends his life as he best may. For the present, as concerns the seneschal, I can bring that to a good end, if ye will let me live. Queen Iseult, and Princess Iseult, I know ye well, that ye are wise and gracious. If I might speak freely, and ye would moderate your wrath against me and this ill will ye have so long borne to Tristan, I would tell ye good tidings."

The Queen looked upon him, and her eyes filled with tears. "Ah!" she cried, "now I hear and know of a truth that thou art Tristan. I doubted me much before, but now hast thou owned the truth unasked. Alas, alas! Sir Tristan, that ever thou camest in my power, since I may not use that power as were most fitting. 'Tis a manifold thing, this royal power, and I ween I might use it against my foe if I would, and do evil against the evil. Shall I withhold my hand? I trow so."

As she spake Brangoene came into the chamber with a smiling face, and saw the sword lying on the ground, and the women with tearful eyes. "What is this?" she said. "What troubles ye all three, and what does the sword here?"

"Brangoene, kinswoman," said the Queen, "we have been tricked and betrayed; we have cherished the serpent for the nightingale. Our foe who deserved death at our hands have we tended as our friend. This is none other than Tristan! Say, may we avenge ourselves?"

"Nay, nay, lady, thine honour is worth more than the life of thy foe. Avenge thyself thou canst not, but leave him now, and take counsel as to what we may best do."

So the three went apart, and the Queen spake: "Tristan said even now, that if we would lay aside the ill will we had borne him, he would give us good tidings. What may that mean, Brangoene?"

And Brangoene answered, "Perchance he may mean well by ye both. One must turn one's mantle as the wind blows, and who knows but what he be come hither for your honour? We may well be thankful that God brought him hither at this time to prove the seneschal's falseness. Had we not found him when we did it had been the worse for thee, my Princess! Treat him kindly, for he is nobly born, and both wise and courteous: whatever thine heart may feel towards him, let thy speech be gentle, for 'tis no light matter that hath brought him hither again."

Then the three went back to Tristan, and when he saw them he knelt before them, saying, "Peace, fair ladies. I pray ye grant me my life, since 'tis but for your honour and profit I have come hither."

The Queen bade him rise, and each proffered him the kiss of peace, though Iseult the Princess did it but unwillingly, and they sat down together.

"My Queen," said Tristan, "wilt thou be my good friend, and aid me to persuade thy daughter, whom thou lovest, to take as husband a noble king, one well fitted to be her lord; fair, and free of hand; a valiant knight, of a royal race, and richer than her father?"

"Were I sure of the truth," said the Queen, "I would even do my best."

. "Yet it is so, lady; for since I was here aforetime I have spoken ever in praise and honour of thee and thy daughter to my uncle, King Mark; and 'tis he who hath sent me hither, for we are both at one accord to pray that thy daughter become his wife and lady, and Queen of Cornwall and England."

"Yea, but if I counsel my husband to make peace with King Mark, shall I not do ill?"

"Nay, lady, he must needs know all the tale; only I prithee see that he be friends with me."

"Of that have no fear," said Queen Iseult.

Then the Queen sent for the King, and prayed of him a boon, saying it lay near to her heart, and to that of her daughter.

"Thou shalt have what thou desirest," said the King.

"Then, lord, I pray thee to pardon Tristan, who slew my brother Morolt; he is here in my keeping."

"Nay, that is more thy matter than mine. Morolt was *thy* brother. If thou hast pardoned Tristan, then so have I."

Then the Queen told her lord the whole matter, and Curmun thought it good, and bade Tristan come before him, and he came and knelt, saying, "Grace, my lord the King."

"Rise, Sir Tristan," said Curmun, "and kiss me, for though I were unwilling to pardon thee, yet since my Queen hath done so I may not do otherwise."

"Lord," said Tristan, "with me thou dost pardon my King and both his realms?"

"Yes, sir," said Curmun.

Then the King bade Tristan sit beside him, and asked him of his errand; and Tristan told him all he had told the Queen, and of his fight with the dragon and all that had chanced.

"How may I know, Sir Tristan, that thou speakest truth?" asked Curmun.

"My lord, I have twenty of King Mark's barons with me; they will be surety enough."

Then Tristan bade Paranise go to the ship, and seek out Kurwenal, and bring him to the palace in secret. And when Kurwenal saw his lord he was greatly rejoiced. "Sir, we feared thou wast slain, and with great difficulty did we keep the lords here; they have sworn to sail hence to-night."

"That they must not do," said Tristan. "Go hence. Tell them I have done all for which I came hither, and bid them to-morrow clothe themselves in their richest attire, and make ready to ride to Court whenever I send a messenger to summon them."

So Kurwenal departed and told the barons the good tidings; but they in their envy said, "Now surely this man is a sorcerer. See how he brings to a lucky end everything to which he sets his hand."

Now the day had come on which the single combat was to be fought, and a great folk had come together, for all wondered who should fight with the seneschal for the maiden Iseult; and each man asked his fellow, "Who may he be who claims to have slain the dragon?" and the question was passed from one to another, but none could give an answer. Meanwhile Tristan's comrades had come from the ship clad in their finest raiment, and he himself robed him as became his royal birth; and when the Queen and Princess Iseult saw him they said to themselves, "Truly this is a gallant knight; methinks our cause is in good hands." Seats were set for the barons in the halls, and the people gazed on them, and marvelled at their rich attire and their silence, for there was not one of them that knew the speech of the country.

Then a messenger came from the King to call the Queen and the Princess to the Court, and she spake: "Rise, Iseult, and we will go. Sir Tristan, do thou abide here, and when I shall send for thee, come thou with Brangoene."

"Gladly, my lady Queen."

So came Queen Iseult, leading with her daughter, even as the dawn brings with it the rising sun. With measured pace the maiden walked beside her mother, clad in a robe of brown samite, and a flowing mantle furred with ermine, which she held with the fingers of her right hand. On her head was a circlet of gold set with jewels, and but for the gleaming stones one would scarce have known that the circlet was there, so golden were her shining locks.

So the fair women passed up the hall, greeting all as they came, the mother with word, the daughter with gesture. When they had taken their seat by the King the seneschal stood forth, and said, "My lord the King, I demand my right of battle. Where is the man who thinks to deprive me of mine honour? My friends and kinsmen are here, and my cause is so good that if this council do justice, all must go well with me. Nor do I fear force; that be far from thee."

"Seneschal," said the Queen, "if this combat may be averted I scarce know what I may do. 'Twere well if thou wouldst leave thy claim on my daughter, and set her free; 'twould be to thy profit as well as to hers."

"Free?" said the seneschal. "Yea, lady, thou wouldst fain throw up a game that is already won. But I should have put myself in much peril for little profit if I now gave up thy daughter. Lady, let there be an end of it—I will wed the Princess, or do thou bring forth the man who slew the dragon."

"Seneschal, I hear what thou sayest, and I will prove my truth." She signed to her squire: "Bring hither the man."

All the nobles looked one on the other, and a murmur ran round the hall, question and answer—all asked who the man might be, but none could tell. But now Brangoene entered, tall and stately, leading by the hand Sir Tristan. He was richly clad in a robe of purple silk, all interwoven and embroidered with gold, that glittered as he moved,

and on his head was a gold and jewelled circlet. His bearing was frank and fearless, and as he drew nearer all made way for him. But when the men of Cornwall saw him they sprang to their feet, and came forward, greeting him joyfully; and taking him and Brangoene by the hand, they led them up to the high dais where sat the King and Queen, and Tristan bowed low before them. Then as the folk clustered round gazing at the strangers, the hostages from Cornwall saw that these were verily their kinsmen, and they made their way through the crowd, laughing and weeping, and greeted them gladly.

The King bade Tristan take his place beside him, and commanded silence to be made, and when all were still, he said, "Seneschal, what dost thou demand?"

"Sire, I slew the dragon."

The stranger rose and spake, "Sire, he slew it not."

"Sire, I did, and I will prove it here."

"What proof dost thou bring?" said Tristan.

"See this head, I brought it hither."

"My lord King," said Tristan, "since he brings the head as proof, bid them look within the jaws; if the tongue be there, I withdraw my claim and renounce the combat."

Then they opened the jaws, and found nothing therein; and, as they marvelled, Tristan bade his squire stand forth with the tongue. "See, now, if this be the dragon's tongue or no." And all looked, and saw that it was in truth the tongue—all save the seneschal, who stood there and knew not what to say, nor whither to turn.

"Lords all," said Tristan, "mark this marvel. I slew the dragon, and cut this tongue from out the jaws, yet this man afterwards smote it a second time to death!"

And all the lords said, "One thing is clear, he who came first and cut out the tongue was the man who slew the monster." And never a man said nay.

Then when the truth was clear, Tristan said, "My lord

the King, I call thy covenant to mind; thy daughter falleth to me."

And the King said, "Sir Knight, thou hast redeemed thy pledge, I will fulfil mine."

But the seneschal cried, "Nay, he speaketh falsely! Sir King, I demand my right of combat ere I be robbed of mine honour."

"Why should he fight with thee, seneschal?" quoth the Queen. "He has won what he would of my daughter. He were more foolish than a child did he fight with thee for nought."

"If he think I have done him wrong, lady," said Tristan, "I will fight with him; let him go and make ready, and I will arm myself."

When the seneschal saw it would come to a combat he called his friends and kinsmen aside to take counsel with them, but he found little comfort, for they thought the matter a shameful one, and they said, "Wherefore fight in an unrighteous cause? 'Twere but foolish to throw thy life after thy lost honour. Since the devil hath tempted thee to thine undoing, keep thy life at least."

"What would ye have me do?"

"Go thou, and say to the King that at thy friends' counsel thou dost withdraw thy challenge."

Then he did as they bade him. And the Queen said mockingly, "Seneschal, never did I think to see thee give up a game that was already won." And throughout the palace, from the highest to the lowest, all made sport of the seneschal, till he scarce durst show his face for shame—so his falsehood brought him to an evil end.

Now when the matter was ended, King Curmun made known to all his nobles the errand on which Tristan had come, and solemnly in their presence he gave his daughter to Tristan's care, that he might lead her to Cornwall as bride to his uncle, King Mark.

Then in the face of them all did Tristan take the Princess

by the hand, and he spake: "King, since this lady is now my Queen and my liege lady, I pray thee to deliver to her all the hostages thou dost hold of Cornwall, for now they are become her subjects, and 'tis but fitting that they should journey with her to her kingdom."

And Curmun was willing; so with much joy the hostages were released.

Then Tristan bade them prepare a ship such as should please both Iseult and himself, and assemble all the men of Cornwall who were in the land that they might set sail with him.

. . . . . .

The while that Tristan and his folk made them ready for the journey did the wise Queen Iseult, with much thought and care, prepare a love potion of such power and magic that did any two drink thereof they must needs, without will of their own, love each other above all things from that day forward; death and life, sorrow and joy, were sealed within that little flask of crystal. Then the Queen took the drink and spake softly to Brangoene: "Brangoene, my kinswoman, let not my words grieve thee: thou must go hence with my daughter, therefore hearken and heed what I say unto thee. Take thou this flask with the drink within it, and keep it in thy care. Treasure it above all thy treasures, see that none know of it, above all that none taste of it; but when Iseult and King Mark be come together, then do thou pour out the drink as if it were wine, and see that the twain drink of it. Nor shalt thou share in it thyself, for 'tis a love potion, forget not that. I commend to thy care Iseult, my dearest daughter; my very life doth hang on her. She and I alike do commend to thee on peril of thine eternal welfare—methinks I have said enough."

"My very true and dear lady," said Brangoene, "if this be the will of ye both, then will I gladly go with Iseult, and watch over her honour and her welfare as best I may."

Then Tristan and his folk departed with much joy for

the haven of Whiteford, and for the love of Iseult, King and Queen and all their household accompanied them thither. Weeping, her steadfast friends surrounded the Princess; her father and mother filled the short space left to them with their lamentations; many eyes were red and tearful, and many hearts weighed down with sorrow for the loss of their life's delight, fair Iseult.

But the two Iseults, the sun and the rosy dawn, and the stately moon, fair Brangoene, when they three must part asunder, the one from the twain, then indeed was woe and wailing! Sad was the severance of such true companionship. Many a time and oft did the Queen-mother kiss them both.

Now they of Cornwall, and the men of Ireland, the young Queen's followers, were already aboard, and had taken their leave. Tristan was the last to enter the ship, leading by the hand the fair young Queen Iseult, the flower of Ireland. Sad and sorrowful she went with him. Then the two bent in greeting towards the land, and prayed God's blessing be on it and on its folk. They pushed off from the shore, and with a loud voice one and all sang, "So sail we forth in the name of God." Thus they departed from Ireland.

By Tristan's counsel they set apart a private cabin for the Queen and her maidens, wherein none might join them, save only at times Tristan, who now and again would go thither to comfort the young Queen as she sat and wept, for she bemoaned herself sorely that she must perforce part from her land where she knew all the folk, and from the friends who were dear to her, and journey with an unknown folk to a land she knew not. Then Tristan would comfort her as he best could, and take her in his arms gently, even as a knight might his liege lady and the wife of his lord. But as often as he laid his arm around her, fair Iseult would think of her uncle's death, and chide with him, saying, "Let be, sir, take thine arm away; thou art a weariful man; wherefore dost thou touch me?"

"Do I then vex thee so sore, fair lady?"

"Yea, forsooth, since I hate thee."

"But wherefore, sweetest lady?"

"Thou didst slay mine uncle."

"For that have I made my peace."

"Maybe. Yet I love thee not, for ere I knew thee had I neither sorrow nor care; thou alone with thy craft and courage hast brought this sorrow upon me. What brought thee from Cornwall to Ireland to my hurt? They who brought me up from my childhood, from them hast thou reft me, and bearest me I know not whither! What price hath been paid for me I know not, nor what shall befall me."

"Nay, nay, fair Iseult, be at peace. Wouldst thou not rather be a rich Queen amongst strangers than poor and weak among thine own kin? Honour and wealth in a strange land, and shame in thy father's kingdom, they weigh not equal, I think me."

"Yea, Sir Tristan," said the maiden. "But say what thou wilt, I would have the lower lot with love and pleasure, rather than displeasure and trouble with great riches."

"Thou sayest true," answered Tristan; "but where one may have riches and pleasure alike, the two good things pass better together than either of the twain alone. But say, were it come to that that thou must needs have taken the seneschal for thine husband, what then? I wot well that would have made thee glad! Hast no thanks for me that I came to thine aid, and freed thee from him?"

"Too late," quoth the maiden. "I might well have thanked thee then, when thou didst deliver me from him, but since then hast thou heaped such sorrow upon me that in sooth I had liefer have wedded the seneschal than have sailed with thee! How worthless soever he may have been, had he dwelt but a short while with me then had he laid aside his evil ways; for this I know of a truth, that he loved me well."

Spake Tristan: "This tale seemeth me over-strange; 'twere great labour indeed for a man to act worthily against his nature. The world holds it for a lie that a worthless knight should do worthy deeds. Be content, fair lady; in a short while will I give thee for lord a king in whom thou shalt find henceforth virtue and honour, riches, joy, and fair living."

So they sailed onward with a favouring wind and a fair sea; but Iseult and her maidens were not wont to be exposed to the water and the wind, and ere long they were sorely in need of rest. Then Tristan bade them land for a little space, and as by good luck they came near a haven, they ran the ship therein, and made it fast, and the more part of the folk went ashore to refresh themselves. But Iseult remained aboard, and Tristan went into the cabin to greet his liege lady, and sat him down beside her, and the twain spake of this thing and of that, till Tristan became thirsty and bade them bring whereof he might drink.

Now beside the Queen was there no one on board save little maidens, and one spied the flask where Brangoene had laid it, and said, "See, here is wine in this flask." But it was not wine that was therein, though like unto it, but bitter pain and enduring sorrow of heart, of which the twain at last lay dead. Yet the little maiden might know nothing of this, so she took the flask from its hiding-place, and brought it to Tristan, and he gave forthwith of the drink to Iseult. She drank of it unwillingly enough, and after a space passed the cup to Tristan, and he too drank of it, and neither knew that it was other than wine. And even as it was done Brangoene entered, and saw well what had chanced. For very terror she became white as death. Cold at heart, she took the vessel of ill chance, and bearing it forth, flung it into the wild and stormy sea. "Woe is me," she said within herself, "that ever I was born into this world! Miserable that I am, I have lost mine honour and failed in my trust. Would to God I had never come on

this journey. I must ever bemoan that death took me not ere I pledged myself to sail with Iseult on this evil journey. Alas, Tristan and Iseult, for this drink shall be your death!"

Now, when the man and maid, Tristan and Iseult, had drunk of the potion, Love, who never resteth but besetteth all hearts, crept softly into the hearts of the twain, and ere they were 'ware of it had she planted her banner of conquest therein, and brought them under her rule. They were one and undivided who but now were twain and at enmity. Gone was Iseult's hatred; no longer might there be strife between them, for Love, the great reconciler, had purified their hearts from all ill-will, and so united them that each was clear as a mirror to the other. But one heart had they —her grief was his sadness, his sadness her grief. Both were one in love and sorrow, and yet both would hide it in shame and doubt. She felt shame of her love, and the like did he. She doubted of his love, and he of hers. For though both their hearts were blindly bent to one will, yet was the chance and the beginning heavy to them, and both alike would hide their desire.

When Tristan felt the pangs of love, then he bethought him straightway of his faith and honour, and would have fain set himself free. "Nay," he said to himself, "let such things be, Tristan; guard thee well, lest others perceive thy thoughts." So would he turn his heart, fighting against his own will, and desiring against his own desire. He would and would not, and, a prisoner, struggled in his fetters. There was a strife within him, for ever as he looked on Iseult, and Love stirred his heart and soul, then did honour draw him back. Yet he must needs follow Love, for his liege lady was she, and in sooth she wounded him more sorely than did his honour and faith to his uncle, though they strove hard for the mastery. For Love looked smiling upon his heart, and led heart and eyes captive; and yet if he saw her not, then was he even more sorrowful. Much he vexed himself, marvelling how he might escape, and saying

to his heart, "Turn thee here or there, let thy desire be other, love and long elsewhere." Yet ever the more he looked into his heart the more he found that therein was nought but Love—and Iseult.

Even so it was with the maiden: she was as a bird that is snared with lime. When she knew the snare of Love and saw that her heart was indeed taken therein, she strove with all her power to free herself, yet the more she struggled the faster was the hold Love laid upon her, and, unwilling, she must follow whither Love led. As with hands and feet she strove to free herself, so were hands and feet even more bound and fettered by the blinding sweetness of the man and his love, and never half a foot's length might she stir save that Love were with her. Never a thought might Iseult think save of Love and Tristan, yet she fain would hide it. Heart and eyes strove with each other. Love drew her heart towards him, and shame drove her eyes away. Thus Love and maiden shame strove together, and did as many have done before her—vanquished, she yielded herself body and soul to the man, and to Love.

Shyly she looked on him, and he on her, till heart and eyes had done their work. And Tristan, too, was vanquished, since Love would have it none otherwise. Knight and maiden sought each other as often as they might do so, and each found the other fairer day by day. For such is the way of Love, as it was of old, and is to-day, and shall be while the world endures, that lovers please each other more as love within them waxeth stronger, even as flowers and fruit are fairer in their fulness than in their beginning; and Love that beareth fruit waxeth fairer day by day till the fulness of time be come.

Love doth the loved one fairer make,
So love a stronger life doth take,
Love's eyes wax keener day by day,
Else would love fade and pass away.

So the ship sailed gaily onwards, even though Love had

thus turned two hearts aside, for she who turneth honey to gall, sweet to sour, and dew to flame, had laid her burden on Tristan and Iseult, and as they looked on each other their colour changed from white to red and from red to white, even as it pleased Love to paint them. Each knew the mind of the other, yet was their speech of other things.

In right maidenly wise Iseult questioned Tristan of his doings; they spake of how he came aforetime, wounded in a barque, to Dublin, how her mother had taken him in her care, and how Tristan had taught her Latin and the lute. And much she praised his valour when he slew the dragon, and she told him how she had known him in the marsh for the minstrel Tantris, and later for Tristan. Then they spake together, and Iseult said, "Ah! how was it that I thought better of my purpose, and slew thee not, that day? Had I known then what I know now, methinks it had been thy death."

"Wherefore," he said, "fair Iseult? What troubleth thee? what dost thou know?"

"What I know, that troubleth me; what I see doth bring me sorrow. Sky and sea worry me, life weigheth heavily on me."

She stirred a little, and leant against him, and the springs of her heart-sorrow rose to her lips and weighed down her head.

Then Tristan laid his arm around her gently, and spake softly: "Ah! fair and sweet, tell me what troubleth thee—of what dost thou make thy plaint?"

And Iseult spake riddling, "*L'Amer*," she said, "doth trouble me; it weigheth down my soul, and bringeth me sorrow."

Then Tristan bethought himself of her words, and saw well how she spoke with a threefold meaning. *L'Amer* might alike mean love and bitterness and the sea; and of the first would he say nothing, so he made answer, "I ween, fair Iseult, that the sea and the wind troubleth thee—the sea,

and the salt sea wind; thou dost taste them, and they are alike bitter to thee."

"Nay, nay. What sayest thou? I taste nor wind nor sea. *L'Amer* alone doth trouble me."

And Tristan whispered, "Of a sooth, sweetheart, so doth it me. *L'Amer* and thou, ye are my sorrow! Heart's lady, sweet Iseult, thou and the love of thee have turned my heart aside; so far have I wandered that nevermore may I find the right path. All that mine eyes behold is but weariness and sorrow, weakness of spirit and heaviness of heart; in all the world is there nought that my heart doth love save thee only."

Iseult spake: "Even so is it with me."

So the twain made their confession of love each to the other, he kissed her, and she him; and each drank of the sweetness that the heart may offer. Yet they kept the matter secret, that none in the world might know their hearts' desire. 'Twas enough that each knew the will of the other.

But the wise Brangoene, she watched them in silence, and saw well what they would fain keep hid, and she thought within herself, "Alas! now see I well how love doth begin." And when she saw how day by day trouble of heart wrought upon them so that they grew pale and thin, a fear came upon her that this love might in truth be their death; and she said in her heart, "Now, be of good courage, and learn what may be the truth of this."

So as they sat together one day, she spake, saying, "Here is no man save we three alone. Tell me, ye twain, what doth ail ye? I see ye hour by hour sigh and weep and make lamentation."

"Lady," said Tristan, "an I dared I would tell thee."

"Speak on, Sir Knight, tell what thou wilt."

"Nay, that may I not, saving that thou dost first swear an oath to be a friend to us, otherwise we are lost."

Then Brangoene sware an oath that she would truly and faithfully do their bidding.

"Dear lady," quoth Tristan, "have pity alike on me and on the Princess; what hath chanced to us we know not, but a madness hath come upon us. We die of love! Aid us, we pray, for our life and death are in thine hands."

Then Brangoene spake to Iseult, "My Princess, is it even as Sir Tristan saith?"

And Iseult answered, "Yea, friend of my heart."

Brangoene quoth, "Woe is us, for the devil hath made sport of us! Now see I well that I must deal for mine own sorrow and your shame; for so must it needs be if I would not let ye die. Yet hear my counsel. Let this shame be kept secret between us three. It strikes at your honour, and if another know it ye are lost, and I with ye. Heart's mistress, sweet Iseult, thy life and thy death they rest with thyself alone. Have no fear of me, but do even as thou thyself shalt think best."

And that night Love, the physician, led Tristan to Iseult's side, and bound the twain together with such master skill and wondrous power that nevermore in all their lives might the bond betwixt them be loosed.

So they sailed on their journey, blissful in each other's love, yet fearful lest any should espy their secret, and sad at heart when they thought how fair Iseult must needs be the bride of one whom she loved not. When they saw the coast of Cornwall, and all on board were joyous that their voyage was well-nigh ended, Tristan and Iseult were heavy at heart, for if they might have had their will never again would they have looked on land, but sailed the seas together for evermore.

As they drew near to shore, Iseult bethought her of a ruse. She sought out Brangoene, and prayed her that she would, on the marriage night, take the place of the Queen; for Brangoene was fair and a maiden, and Iseult had it in her heart to belong to none but to her lover Tristan. So she spake on this wise to Brangoene, who kept silence a space, and then answered,

"Dear lady, thy mother, my liege lady and Queen, committed thee to my care; 'twas my part on this ill-fated voyage to have kept thee from this very sorrow. Through my carelessness have sorrow and shame come upon thee, so may I not complain if I must needs share the shame with thee. 'Tis but right that I should take my part therein. Ah, God! how came I to be thus forgetful?"

"Dear cousin," said Iseult, "wherefore reproach thyself? I know not of what thou speakest."

"Lady, 'twas but the other day I cast a crystal flask into the sea."

"'Tis true. But why should that so trouble thee?"

"Alas! that same flask, and the drink that was therein, 'twas the death of ye both!"

"How may that be? What is this wild tale?"

Then Brangoene told the twain the story, from beginning to end, even as it had chanced.

"Now in God's name," quoth Tristan, "were it death or life, the poison was sweet! I know not what may come of it, but such death it pleaseth me well! Shall fair Iseult indeed be my death, then would I die daily!"

And yet, however sweet love may be, a man must at whiles bethink him of his honour, and Tristan knew well that he owed both faith and honour to Mark, who had sent him to fetch his bride, and the twain fought hard with his love, and vexed heart and soul between them, yet was it of no avail, for since he had chosen Love, Honour and Faith alike must needs be put to the worse.

Then Tristan sent messengers in two boats to the land to bear tidings of the coming of the fair Princess of Ireland; and Mark sent forth a thousand messengers through all the kingdom to bid his knights prepare a fitting welcome for their comrades and the strangers who came with them, and Mark himself received the twain even as man welcomes that which he holds the dearest upon earth.

Then King Mark bade all his barons assemble at Court

within eighteen days, to witness his wedding with Iseult, and they came together, many a fair company of knights and ladies, all eager to behold fair Iseult, of whose beauty they had heard such tales. And when they had looked upon her, there was but one thought and one voice among them; "Iseult the fair is the marvel of the world. 'Tis true what we have heard of her: she is even as the sun rejoiceth the hearts of men; never did any kingdom win so fair a maiden."

So King Mark and Iseult of Ireland were wedded, and the kingdoms of Cornwall and England were laid in her hands, with the pledge that if she bare no heir to Mark, then should Tristan inherit them, and so was homage done to her.

When night fell, then were matters wrought even as Iseult had planned. When the Queen put out the lights in the bridal chamber, then Brangoene, in the royal robes, lay down beside the King; but when the King asked wine, that men were wont to drink of the bridal night, Brangoene arose, and when Tristan bare the lights and wine, 'twas Iseult sat beside the couch. But the drink that she and Mark should have shared had been drunk long since, and the flask lay in the depths of the sea.

REYNARD THE FOX

(*First printed in 1498*)

(Translated by THOMAS ROSCOE)

[One of the earliest satiric fables, the origin of Reynard the Fox, is lost in the remote beginnings of folk lore As an example of satiric humour it has long been an established favourite of the Germans]

As soon as the tidings spread that Reynard the Fox and his kinsman Grimbard were arrived at Court, all ranks, from the highest to the lowest, prepared accusations against the fox. His heart quaked within him, but his countenance was, as usual, calm and confident, and he bore himself as proudly as before. His nephew attended him through the streets, and he walked as gallantly into the Court as if he had been the King's son, and free from every imputation whatsoever. When he came opposite the chair of state in which the King sat, he stopped and said, "Heaven long give Your Majesty glory and renown, above all princes of the earth. I assure Your Majesty that no monarch had ever a more faithful servant than I have been; than I now am, and so in spite of my enemies will die. For, my dread liege lord, I know that many are plotting my destruction in this Court, if they could prevail with Your Majesty; but you scorn the slanders of malice; and though in these days flatterers succeed in princes' Courts, it is not so with you, nor will they reap anything but shame for their reward." But the King cut him short at these words, and cried, "Peace, treacherous Reynard! I know your dissimulation, and can expound your flattery, yet both shall now fail you at your need. Think you I will be taken with the music of smooth words? No, it has but too often deceived me. The peace which I have proclaimed and sworn to, that have you broken!" And as the King was

proceeding, Chanticleer cried out, "Oh, how I have lost the benefit of that noble peace!" "Be still, Chanticleer," cried the King, "let me proceed. Thou devil among the innocent, with what face canst thou say thou lovest me, and seest all these wretched creatures ready to disprove thy words; yea, whose wounds yet spit bloody defiance at thee; and for which thy dearest life shall soon answer." "*In nomine Patris*," cried the fox; "what, my dread lord, if Bruin's crown be bloody, what is that to me? If Your Majesty employed him in a message, which he neglected, to steal honey at the carpenter's house, where he got his wounds, am I to blame? If revenge he sought, why did he not take it himself? he is strong and puissant; it was not to be considered as my weakness. As for Tibert the cat, whom I received with all friendship, if he would steal into the priest's barn against my advice, and there lose his eyes—nay, his life—in what have I offended? Was I Tibert's keeper? or the guardian of the great bear? Oh, my dread lord! you may do your royal pleasure; notwithstanding my perfect innocence, you may adjudge me to die; for I am your poor vassal, and look only for your mercy. I know your strength and my own weakness; my death would yield you small satisfaction, yet whatever your goodwill and pleasure be, that to me shall prove most acceptable."

While he thus spoke, Bellin the ram stepped forth, along with his ewe-dam Oleway, and besought the King to hear their complaint; and next Bruin the bear with all his lineage, followed by Tibert the cat, Isegrim the wolf, Kayward the hare, Paulter the boar, and nearly all the other beasts of the Court, who rose with one accord, crying for vengeance upon the fox, with such clamour that the King was induced to order the fox to be there secured and arrested.

Upon this arrest a Cabinet council was summoned, and every voice was in favour of Reynard's execution; though

he answered every accusation *seriatim*, with a wonderful degree of art, to the admiration of all the Court. Witnesses, however, were examined, the proofs established; the fox was condemned and judgment recorded. He was to be hanged up by the neck till he was dead; at which sentence the fox cast down his head; all his jollity was fled, and no flattery or smooth words any longer availed.

This being resolved, Grimbard his nephew, and several others nearest him in blood, unable to endure the sight of his death, took leave of the King and left the Court. When the monarch saw so many gallant gentlemen depart, all sad and weeping, being near in blood and alliance to the prisoner, he said to himself, "It behoves me to take good counsel what I am about, for though Reynard has faults, he has many friends and more virtues." As the King was thus pondering, Tibert said to Sir Bruin, "Why are you so slow in the execution of your sentence, and you, Sir Isegrim? See you not there are many bushes and hedges; it is near evening, and if the prisoner escape, his subtlety is so great that all the art in the world will never again entangle him. If you mean to execute him, proceed quickly. It will be night before the gallows can be made." At these words Isegrim exclaimed, suddenly recollecting himself, "There is a pair of gallows hard by." At the same time he fetched a deep sigh. "What, are you afraid, Sir Isegrim; or is this execution against your mind?" Said Tibert, "Remember the hanging of both your kinsmen was his work. Had you now a proper sense of justice, you would hang him for the same and not stand trifling thus." Isegrim, half angry, answered, "Your anger puts out the eye of your better reason, though if we had a halter that would fit his neck, we would soon despatch him." Reynard, who had long remained silent, said, "Yes, I beseech you to shorten my pain; Sir Tibert has a cord strong enough, in which he himself was hanged at the priest's house, when he got between the holy man's legs and bit him so dread-

fully. Besides, he can climb well; let him mount and be my executioner; for it would be a discredit both to Sir Bruin and Sir Isegrim, thus to treat their own nephew. I am sorry I live to see it; but since you are resolved to be my hangmen, play your parts and delay not. Go before, Uncle Bruin, and lead the way: follow me, Isegrim, my cousin, and beware I escape not." "You say well," said Bruin, "it is the best counsel I ever heard you give."

So forth they went, and Isegrim and all his friends guarded Reynard, leading him by the neck and other parts of his body, at which usage the fox felt quite dismayed. Yet he said meekly, "Why put yourself to all this trouble, my best kinsman? Believe me, I could well entreat your forgiveness, though you rejoice in my sufferings. Still I know that did my aunt, your wife, see what was passing, she would not see me thus cruelly tormented, were it only for old affection's sake. But do with me as you will; I must endure the worst. As for Bruin and Tibert, I leave my revenge to justice, and to you the reward of traitors I know my worst—fortune and death can come but once I wish it were already past, for to me it is no terror. I saw my brave father die, and how quickly he vanished! The worst of death is therefore familiar to me." "Then," said Sir Isegrim, "let us make haste, for his curse shall not light upon me by delaying." So he on one side, and Sir Bruin on the other, they led the fox to the gallows, Tibert skipping before them with the halter.

On reaching the place of execution, the King, the Queen, and all the nobility took their place, to behold the fox die. Reynard, though full of sorrow and dismay, was still busy thinking how he might escape, and again triumph over his proud enemies, by drawing the King over to his party. "Though the King," he said to himself, "be offended with me—as he has reason enough, Heaven knows—yet I may perhaps live to become his bosom friend." While thus cogitating, the wolf said, "Now, Sir Bruin, remember your

injuries; revenge yourself well; for the day is come we have so long looked for. Go, Tibert, and mount the gallows-tree with the rope, and make a running noose, for you shall have your will of your enemy. Take heed, good Sir Bruin, that he eludes us not, and I will now place the ladder; when everything will be complete." This being done the fox spoke: "Now well may my heart be heavy, for death stands in all his naked horrors before my eyes, and I cannot escape. Oh, my dread lord the King, and you, my sovereign lady the Queen, and all you, my lords and gentlemen, here assembled to see me die, I beseech you grant this one charitable boon. Let me unburthen my heart before you, and cleanse my soul of its manifold sins, so that hereafter no man may be unjustly accused or executed for my secret misdeeds. This done, death will come more easy to me, and the assistance of your prayers will lift my soul, I doubt not, to the skies."

All now took compassion on the fox, and beseeched the King to grant his request, which was done. And then the fox spake: "Help me, Heaven! for I see no man here whom I have not offended. Yet this was not from evil inclination; for in my youth I was accounted as virtuous as any breathing. I played with the lambs all day long, and took delight in their pretty bleating. But once in my play I bit one, and the taste of its blood was so sweet that ever since I could not forbear. This evil humour drew me into the woods among the goats; where, hearing the bleating of the young kids, I slew one, and after, two more, which made me so hardy that I began to murder geese and pullets. Thus my crime growing by habit, the fancy so possessed me that all was fish that was caught in my net. In the winter season I met with Isegrim, as he lay under a hollow tree, and he unfolded unto me how he was my uncle, and laid the pedigree down so plain that from that day forth we became companions—a friendship I have reason to curse; for then, indeed, began the history of our thefts

and slaughters. He stole the great prizes and I the small; he murdered nobles and I the meanest subjects; and in all these actions his share was ever the greatest. When he caught a calf, a ram, or a wether, his voracity would hardly afford me the bones to pick. When he mustered an ox or a cow, he first served himself, his wife, and all his family, nothing remaining, I say, for me but the bare bones. I state not this as having been in want, it being well known that I have more plate, jewels, and coin than twenty carts would carry; but only to show his vile ingratitude." When the King heard him speak of this infinite wealth, his heart grew inflamed with avarice; and, interrupting the prisoner, he said, "Reynard, where is that treasure you speak of?" The fox answered, "My lord, I will gladly inform you; though it be true the wealth was stolen, and had it not been so stolen it would have cost Your Majesty his life, which Heaven long preserve." The Queen here started, and said in great dismay, "What are these dangers you speak of, Reynard? I do command ye to unfold these doubtful speeches, and to keep nothing concealed that affects the life of my dread lord; go on."

The fox, with a sorrowful countenance, replied, "Oh, my dread sovereign lady, I would that I might now die, did not your commands and the health of my own soul so prevail with me that I must discharge my conscience, and yet speak nothing but what I will make good at the hazard of damnation. True it is, that the King was to have been cruelly despatched by his own people: yea, I must confess by some of my nearest kindred, whom I would not accuse, did not the health of my soul and my fealty to the King command me to do so." The King, much perplexed at this discovery, said, "Can it be true, Reynard, what you say?" The fox answered, "Alas, my dread lord, you see the case in which I stand; how small a sand is left in my poor glass to run. I will dissemble not; what dissembling can avail me, if my soul perish?" and saying this he trembled

and looked so pitifully, that the Queen took pity upon him. She humbly besought the King, for the safety of his royal person, to take compassion on the fox, and to command all his subjects to hold their peace, till he had revealed all he knew. This was done, and the fox proceeded as follows: "Since it is the pleasure of my dread lord the King, and that his royal life lies in the balance with my present breath, I will freely unfold this foul and capital treason, sparing no guilty person for any respect whatsoever, however high in greatness, blood, or authority. Know then, my dread lord, that my father, by accident turning up the earth, found King Ermetick's treasure—an infinite and incalculable mass of riches—with which he became so vain and haughty that he looked down upon all the beasts of the forest with contempt, even upon his kinsmen and companions. At length he caused Tibert the cat to go into the forest of Arden to Bruin the bear, and to render him his homage and fealty; saying that if it would please him to be king, he must come into Flanders, where my father received him nobly. Next he sent for his wife, Grimbard my nephew, and for Isegrim the wolf, with Tibert the cat. These five coming between Gaunt and the village called Elfe, they held solemn council for the space of one night, in which, instigated by the devil, and confident in my father's riches, it was concluded that Your Majesty should be murdered. They took a solemn oath to this effect in the following way: Sir Bruin, my father, Grimbard, and Tibert laid their hands on Isegrim's crown, and swore to make Bruin their king; to place him in the chair of state at Acon, and set the imperial diadem on his head. That should any oppose the scheme, my father was to hire assassins that should utterly chase and root them out of the forests. After this it happened that, my nephew Grimbard being one day heated with wine, made a discovery of this damnable plot to Dame Slopard his wife, commanding her also to keep it secret. But she too, as women will, only kept it until she met with

me, charging me to reveal it to no one! She moreover gave me such proofs of its truth as to cause the very hairs of my head to start upright, while my heart sunk cold and heavy within me, like a piece of lead. Indeed, it led me to call to mind the story of the frogs, who complained to Jupiter that they had no king to govern them, and he presently sent them a stork, which ate and devoured them up; and by whose tyranny they became the most miserable of all creatures. Then they cried unto Jupiter for redress, but it was too late; for those that will not be content with their freedom, must consequently be subjected to thraldom. Even so I feared it might happen to us; and I grieved for the fate of Your Majesty, though you respect not my sorrows. The ambition of the bear is such that should the government come into his hands, the commonwealth would fall a sacrifice to his tyranny. Besides, I know Your Majesty is of that royal and lofty lineage, so mighty, gracious, and merciful withal that it would have been a damnable exchange to have seen a ravenous bear sit in the throne of the royal lion; for in Sir Bruin and his whole generation there is more prodigal looseness and inconstancy than in any beast whatsoever. I therefore began to meditate how I might foil my father's false and treacherous designs, who sought to elevate a traitor and a slave to the height of your imperial throne. I was aware that as long as he held the treasure, Your Majesty was in danger, and I grew exceedingly troubled and perplexed. So I resolved, if possible, to find where the treasure was concealed, and I watched him night and day—in the woods, in the hedges, and in the open fields. To whatever spot my father turned his eyes, there was I, sure of detecting him one time or other in the fact.

"One day, as I was lying flat down upon the ground, I spied him coming out of a hole, with a very thievish look. He gazed round about him to see if he was observed, and thinking the coast clear, he stopped up the hole with sand

so even and smoothly that the most curious eye could discern no difference between it and the other earth. Then, where the print of his foot remained, he stroked it over with his tail, and smoothed it with his mouth so that no person could perceive it. Indeed, that and many other subtleties I learned from him at that time. When he had thus finished, he went away towards the village about his private affairs, while I proceeded towards the hole, and in spite of all his cunning I quickly found the entrance. Then I entered the cavern, where I found an innumerable quantity of treasure; and taking Ermelin, my wife, along with me, we both laboured day and night in conveying it to another place, where we deposited it safe from every human eye. During the time we were thus employed my father was in deep consultation with the rest of the traitors to compass his majesty's death. It was concluded that Isegrim the wolf should traverse all the kingdom, and promise to all the beasts that would take wages, and acknowledge Bruin for their sovereign and defend his title, a full year's pay beforehand. In this journey my father accompanied him, bearing letters patent signed to that purport, little suspecting that he was deprived of all the wealth with which to promote his scheme. When this negotiation was concluded between Elge and Soam, and a vast body of soldiers raised for action against the next spring, they returned to Bruin and his party, to whom they declared the many perils they had escaped in the dukedom of Saxony, where they were pursued by hounds and huntsmen. They next showed Bruin the muster-rolls, which pleased him exceedingly; for here he found about twelve hundred of Isegrim's lineage, all sworn for action, besides the bear's kindred, the cats and the dassens, all which would be in readiness at an hour's notice. All this I discovered from good authority; and the plot becoming ripe for execution, my father went to the cave for his treasure. What was his infinite agony and trouble to find the place open and ransacked! He

became desperate, and soon afterwards went to the next tree and hanged himself.

"Thus, by my skill, Bruin's treason was defeated, and for this I now suffer, while those two false traitors, Bruin and Isegrim, sit in the King's Privy Council, with great authority, procure my disgrace, and trample me underfoot. I have lost my father in Your Majesty's cause, and what stronger proof can be tendered of my loyalty? I have lost my life in defending yours."

The King and Queen, indulging a hope of possessing these inestimable treasures, ordered Reynard down from the gibbet, and entreated him farther to unfold its place of concealment. "What," replied the fox, "shall I make my worst enemies my heirs? Shall these traitors, who take away my life, and attempt Your Majesty's, become possessed of the fortune I enjoy?" "Then," said the Queen, "fear not, Reynard, the King shall save your life, and you shall henceforth swear faith and true allegiance to His Majesty." The fox answered, "Sovereign lady, if the King, out of his royal nature, will give credit to my truth, and forgive my offences, there was never king so rich as he will be." Then the King, interrupting the Queen, said, "Fair consort, will you believe the fox? Know that it is his chief excellence to lie, to steal, and to impose upon others." But the Queen said, "Yet now, my dear lord, you may freely believe him; for, however full of deceit he may have been in his prosperity, you see he is now changed. Why, he accuses his own father, and Grimbard, his dearest nephew and kinsman! Were he dissembling, he might have laid his imputation upon other beasts, and not on those he loves best." "Well, madam," replied the King, "you shall, for this time, rule me; I will give free pardon to the fox, yet under this condition—that if he be ever found tripping again, though in the smallest offence, both he and his shall be utterly rooted out of my dominions." The fox looked sadly when the King spake thus: withal he rejoiced within himself,

and he said, "Most dread lord, it were a huge shame in me should I dare to speak any untruths in this august presence." Then the King, taking a straw from the ground, pardoned the fox for all the transgressions which either he or his father before him had committed. No wonder the fox now began to smile, for life was most sweet to him; and he fell down before the King and Queen, humbly thanking them for all his mercies, and protesting that he would make them the richest princes in the world. At these words the fox took up a straw, and proffering it to the King, said to him, "My dread lord, I beseech Your Majesty to receive this pledge of entire surrender unto Your Majesty of the great King Ermetick's treasure, with which I freely present you out of my free will and pleasure." The King received the straw, and, smiling, gave the fox great thanks: at which the latter chuckled heartily to think of the grossness of the imposture. From that day forward no one's counsel so much prevailed with the King as that of the fox; and confiding in this he said, "My gracious lord, you must understand that on the west side of Flanders there stands a wood called Husterloe, near which runs a river named Crekenpit: this is a wilderness so vast and impassable that hardly throughout the year there crosses a man or woman over the place. In it I have hid this treasure, and thither I should wish Your Majesty and the Queen to go; for I know of none besides Your Highnesses whom I dare trust in so great a design. When Your Majesty reaches it, you will see two birchen trees growing by the pit, and there you shall find the treasure, consisting of coin, precious jewels, and the crown which King Ermetick wore. With this crown Bruin the bear was to have been crowned, if his treason had succeeded according to expectation; there too you will find many costly stones, of which, when you are possessed, then remember the love of your poor servant, Reynard." The King answered, "Sir Reynard, you must yourself help to dig up this treasure, for else I see I shall

never find it. I have heard of such places as Paris, London, Acon, and Cullen, but Crekenpit I never heard of; therefore I fear you dissemble." The fox blushed at these words; yet with a bold countenance he said, "Is Your Majesty still so doubtful of my faith? Nay, then, I will approve my words by public testimony," and with that he called forth Kayward the hare, commanding him to come before the King and Queen, to answer truly to such questions as he should ask him. The hare answered, "I will answer truly in all things, though I die for the same." Then Reynard said, "Know you not where Crekenpit stands?" "Yes," replied Kayward, "I have known it these dozen years. It stands in a wood called Husterloe, to be sure, amidst a vast and wild wilderness, where I have endured much torment both of hunger and cold. Besides, it was there where Father Simony, the friar, made false coin for the benefit of himself and his brethren; yet that was before I and Ring the hound became companions." "Well," said the fox, "you have spoken sufficiently; go to your place again." So away went the hare. Then said the fox, "My sovereign lord the King, what is your opinion? Am I worthy of your confidence or no?" The King said, "Yes, Reynard, and pray excuse my suspicion; it was my ignorance which did thee wrong. Therefore make speedy preparation to accompany us to the pit where this treasure lies." The fox answered, "Alas! my lord, do you imagine that I would not fain go with you, if I could venture without your dishonour, which I cannot do. For you must understand, though it be to my disgrace, that when Isegrim the wolf, in the devil's name, would needs grow religious, and play the monk, the portion of meat which was for six monks was too little for him alone. He complained so piteously that, being my kinsman, I compassionated his case, and advised him to run away, which he did. For this reason I at present stand accursed and excommunicated under the Pope's sentence, and am determined to-morrow

at sunrise to journey towards Rome, and from Rome I intend to cross the seas for Holyland, and will never return again into my native country till I have done so much good, and so far expiated my sins, that I may attend on Your Majesty's person with honour and reputation." The King, hearing this pious design, said, "Since you stand accursed by the censures of the Church, I must not have you about me; and therefore I will take Kayward the hare and some others with me to Crekenpit; only I command you, Reynard, as you value our favour, to clear yourself of His Holiness's curse." "That is the reason, my lord, of my going to Rome; neither will I rest, night or day, till I have obtained absolution." "The course you take is good," said the King; "go on and prosper in your fair intent, and return home better than you went."

HOWLEGLASS

(First printed in 1483)

(Translated by THOMAS ROSCOE)

[Howleglass, a traditional character, half fool, half knave, the exponent of that type of *riposte* especially dear to the German peasant mind, has endeared himself to generation after generation, and is peculiarly typical of the Teutonic form of humour.]

HOW HOWLEGLASS ENTERED INTO A MERCHANT'S SERVICE, IN QUALITY OF A COOK

IN the town of Herdellem there resided a rich merchant, who, happening one day to be walking in one of his own fields, a short way out of the city, saw Howleglass lying on the green. He inquired who he was? To this Howleglass replied, "I am a cook without a master, and I have been a cook's servant; otherwise a scullion; but that is now not a place for me." The merchant said: "If you like to become my servant, I will give you good board and wages, besides your clothes; you shall have a trial, for my wife is continually bickering one after another with all her cooks." Howleglass promised to do his best to please him; and his new master asked him his name. To which our hero replied, that it was Bartholomew. "The name," said the merchant, "is too long, you shall be called *Dol.*" "Sir," said Howleglass, "just as you like best, it pleases me well." "Then come," added his master, "you are the sort of man I want; let us go directly into my garden, to gather herbs for the young boiled chickens, as to-morrow I have a party coming, and we must make merry with the best cheer." So they went to the house, and when the merchant's wife saw them come in, she said, "Heyday, master mine, what kind of a servant have you brought us here? Are you

afraid lest the bread should be left to grow mouldy? What is he for?" "Oh, you shall see that, my dear, to-morrow. Here, Dol, take this pannier, and follow me to the shambles."

Away they went, and the merchant bought some pieces of roasting meat, saying on his return, "Now, Dol, remember when you put this sirloin down to-morrow that you leave it to do coolly at a distance, so as not to catch, or singe; the boiling piece you may put on a good deal earlier."

"Very good, master," said Howleglass, "it shall be done." So the next morning he rose betimes and brought the meat he was to boil near the fire. But that which he intended to roast he stuck upon the spit, and placed it at a cool distance, as he had been told (namely, in the cellar between two barrels of beer), from the fire. Now before the merchant's guests had assembled he went to see that all was going on well in the kitchen (for his wife was a fine lady), and he inquired whether the dinner was almost ready, to which Howleglass made answer: "Yes, everything but the roast beef." "Everything but!" exclaimed the merchant; "and where is that?" "It is on the spit," answered Howleglass; "it is doing cool, at a distance, as you desired, in the coolest place in the house, which is the beer cellar. You did not say when you would like to have it roasted." While his master was discussing this point with Howleglass the guests began to arrive, to whom he candidly related the incident, at which some looked grave and others laughed; while his lady was least of all satisfied with the joke. Indeed, she proposed an ejectment of the new cook from the premises forthwith.

"My love," said the merchant, "give yourself no kind of uneasiness about that! To-morrow I am going to Gollai; and he must see me there, but on my return he shall be discharged." They then all proceeded to dinner, and made as good cheer as they could upon what they had got. In the evening, when all was over, his master called Howle-

glass, and said, "Dol, see that my coach is in readiness early to-morrow morning, for I and the priest are going as far as Gollai; so look that it be well cleaned and greased." Accordingly when the whole family were abed, Howleglass proceeded to grease the chariot well both inside and out. And in the morning our merchant and the priest mounted to drive off; but slip went the priest wherever he laid his hand or foot; and he had many a time nearly broken his neck as they drove along. "What the deuce," he cried, "can it be that is so thick and greasy?"

So they stopped, and called Howleglass in a great passion, inquiring what vile work he had been doing, and swore and threatened dreadfully. Just then a wagon-load of straw luckily went by, and the unhappy party purchased a small quantity with which to purify the well-bedizened chariot. Quite enraged, the merchant cried out, "Off to the gallows, you rascal!" and soon after Howleglass saw one not far from the roadside, and driving the chariot right underneath it, he was proceeding very leisurely to unharness the horses. "What is that you are about, villain!" said his master. "Why," replied Howleglass, "did not you order me to drive off to the gallows; where I thought I was to set you down." On looking up, the priest and the merchant sure enough saw the gibbet; upon which his master, being seized with a panic, commanded him to back, and drive right away as hard as he could flog.

Hearing this, Howleglass dashed neck and nothing through the mud, so that by the horrible pulling and tearing the vehicle came straight in two, the hinder part remaining, with the merchant and the priest stuck in the mud, and the other proceeding with Howleglass and the horses just as if nothing had happened. At length, with much shouting and running, the merchant overtook his driver, and was beginning to inflict summary vengeance upon him when the priest came up and prevented him; and in this fashion they contrived to accomplish their

journey, and so home again. Well! his wife inquired how the merchant had enjoyed his journey. "Oh, delightful," cried the merchant, "now that we are safely returned." They then called Howleglass, saying, "To-night eat and drink to your heart's content, for to-morrow you quit this house. I cannot keep you, you are too great a malicious rascal for me." "All right, master," said Howleglass. And in the morning when the merchant went out he again said, "Eat and drink, take as much as you like, but do not let me find you here when I come home from church." So while the family was at church Howleglass proceeded, as he had been ordered, to take what he liked; and very shortly he had almost completely gutted the house. In short the merchant met him with a whole load of his goods in the street as he was coming from church. "Ha! my honest cook," he cried, "what are you dressing now?" "What you commanded me to do," replied Howleglass. "You informed me that I might take what I liked, and rid the house of me." "Leave these things where they are," exclaimed the merchant, "and go to the devil if you please." Howleglass said, "I do everything that my masters order me, and yet I cannot live in peace." So he quitted the merchant in a huff, whom he was sorry again to have met with, while the former had his goods conveyed back to the house.

HOW HOWLEGLASS WAS INVITED TO DINNER, AND WHAT HE DID

IN the town of Luxembourg there lived a certain maker of flutes, who had so long beaten up the whole country round as to be up to all kind of tricks. Being in Howleglass's company, he one day said to him, "Let us some day have a drinking bout. Suppose you were to come and dine with me to-morrow, if you are able." "That I can

very easily do," said Howleglass, though he did not rightly hear his words. The next day, however, when the hour was come, he proceeded to the house of the flute-maker. What was his disappointment to find the house doors fast, and no answer to his calls; and after many vain trials he was compelled to kick his heels backwards and forwards, in hopes the host might return, until, the afternoon being far spent, he was compelled to own himself a fool, and went reluctantly home.

On the ensuing day, he met his acquaintance, the flute-maker, in the market, and said, "My good friend, when you invite any one to dinner, are you in the habit of shutting your house door when it is ready?" The other answered, "If you will recollect right, I asked you to come and dine with me, if you were able; but the house door being shut, and no one coming to open, it seems you were not able, therefore I excuse you." Howleglass, sadly nettled at being made the subject of a trick like his own, replied, "I thank you, sir; I did not think of that; but I see we may still live and learn something." The other then laughed, and added, "But, jesting apart, if you will now go to my house, I will soon follow, and you shall have an excellent dinner of roast and boiled, with no one but yourself."

So Howleglass went, and found everything as he had said, the man's wife busily directing about the dinner. As it was quite ready, the girl went to look out for her master; his wife, too, finding she lingered, went after her to the door, while Howleglass following, just as they had stepped out, shut the door upon them both. He had told them that the master was carrying home a fine sturgeon, and both wife and servant now hastened to meet him.

Seeing them running so quickly, he said, "Whither so fast?" and his wife made answer, "Howleglass is at our house, and told us that you had bought a fine sturgeon; where is it, that we may help you to carry it?" Much vexed, the man said, "Why not stop within doors; depend

upon it he has tricked us!" True enough, when they arrived, they found all the entrances secured. "Aye, this is the sturgeon you are come to fetch," cried the husband, as he knocked again and again. "And so Howleglass stood in our shoes yesterday; verily, I fear we shall dine as he did." "Leave off knocking there," cried Howleglass from within, "and go about your business; for the good host assured me that I was to dine here alone, but you may come after dinner." The flute-maker said, "I said so, but did not mean so." But he was obliged to go to the house of one of his neighbours until it pleased Howleglass to admit him into his own house, where he was enjoying himself dining with *no one but himself*, as he had been told.

Afterwards he opened the doors, as a great favour, and admitted the host, who only said, for he was very hungry, "Howleglass, this is a bad habit of yours to shut the owners out of their own houses!" and in this way was the trick of the host doubly requited.

DR. FAUSTUS

(*First printed in 1587*)

(Translated by THOMAS ROSCOE

[The legend of Faustus was rendered famous by Goethe's handling of it, but its theme is much earlier The present extract goes back to the genesis from which doubtless the poet derived his inspiration]

ALL good Christians may easily conjecture what was the situation of the doctor, deserted by the Lord and all the heavenly host, after having delivered his blood-signed contract into the demon's hands, a contract which no honest pious householder would put his name to, being more like the act of a fiend than of a mortal.

Doctor Faustus now resided in the house which had been his uncle's, and which the latter had bequeathed to him. There too he had taken into his service a young student as his secretary and attendant, a knowing rogue of the name of Christoffel Wagenar, who liked the sort of sport he saw, too easily imbibing his master's example, who promised to make him an expert fellow. And this was no difficult task, as, like most young people, he was well inclined to avail himself of such lessons as his master taught. Excepting this hopeful youth and his familiar demon, Faustus would have no boarders in his house. Mephistopheles still attended upon his master in the shape of a monk, and he was accustomed always to summon him, as he sat in his study, which he constantly kept closed

The doctor next began to indulge in very luxurious living, feasting upon rarities, and eating and drinking only of the best. For whenever he wished to have the best wine, he sent his familiar to the cellars of the most distinguished personages of the place, as those of a certain prince, of

the Duke of Beijoren, and of the Bishop of Salzburgh, whereby they were all considerably diminished. By the same method he obtained the most costly meats, cooked by the same magical arts, as his demon could convey them with the swiftness of a bird, and dart as quickly through an open window.

Thus all the houses and palaces of the neighbouring counts and princes, and all their best-furnished tables, were laid under contribution; insomuch that the doctor and his secretary appeared in elegant apparel, the clothes and silks having been ordered upon commission by his demon, who visited the shops at Nuremburg, at Strasburg, and at Frankfort in the night, taking very long credit for his pains. The same happened to the shoemakers, and numerous others among the operatives, who have all so strong a prejudice against this kind of sale of their articles during the night. And, in short, though they were stolen, they were always something excellent and good in their way; while Mephistopheles evaded all informations and pursuits.

For these services his familiar was to receive twenty-five crowns per week, amounting to an annual income of thirteen hundred, with which Mephistopheles was quite content. Doctor Faustus now continued to lead the life of a confirmed epicurean both by day and night; until he lost all notion of Heaven and Hell, and flattered himself that life and soul would alike perish together. His familiar had long been persuading him to enter into a demoniacal association, previous to naturalising himself in the infernal state, to which his master, heedless of everything but good cheer, and conceiving the whole little more than an idle imagination, or mere fudge, at length consented, and said, "Let my name be entered in your books, friend Mephistopheles, come what will, as soon as you please." Mephistopheles next advised him to think of adding to his establishment by taking to himself a wife. "Stop," cried Faustus, laughing. "That is a more serious consideration,

friend; it will require some more discussion;" and the demon joined heartily in his laugh.

Scarcely, however, had he adopted his first proposal and finished these words, when a violent storm of wind shook the house, as if everything was about to fall topsy-turvy. The doors and windows sprang ajar, and there was so strong a smell of sulphur that any one would have thought the whole house was on fire. Doctor Faustus attempted to run downstairs, but found himself seized by a strong arm and pushed back into the room with so much violence that he could move neither hand nor foot. A blaze of fire encircled him on all sides, as if ready to consume him, and he cried out for Mephistopheles with all his might, to assist, to save, and to obey him. Upon this the devil himself appeared; but in such grisly and savage forms as quite terrified the doctor. "What is the meaning of all this," exclaimed Satan: "howling there like a dog? What think you now?" The doctor, aware that he must have in some way infringed upon his compact with Mephistopheles, very humbly entreated the devil's pardon, to which the Prince of Darkness briefly replied, "Then see you better to it, and stick to your promise, I advise you!" and with this he disappeared.

Mephistopheles now attended his master and said, "As long, sir, as you continue true to your engagements, you may always rely upon my anticipating your wishes, in everything most agreeable; and in proof of this you shall every evening be presented with a lady of such surprising beauty as not to be exceeded by anything you have ever seen in this city. Cast your eye on all sides, choose where and whom you will, the same shall be sure to attend upon your pleasure." This proposal consoled and pleased Doctor Faustus exceedingly, and he greatly regretted that he had so long continued in his single and unsociable state. Henceforward his head was full of nothing but beautiful women, both day and night, insomuch that the devil had

no further trouble in keeping him to his promise (for the doctor had just before been plotting to save himself by retiring to a monastery and leading a chaste single life, which had so greatly enraged the devil), whereas he now considered the whole of his previous life, unenlivened by the charms of female society, as little better than lost. One favourite succeeded to another, he never dreamed of one and the same during four-and-twenty hours, and the devil triumphed in the success of his plan.

CONCERNING A NOBLE LORD AND LADY WHO BY MEANS OF DOCTOR FAUSTUS WERE HAPPILY UNITED IN THE BONDS OF WEDLOCK, DURING THE SEVENTEENTH YEAR OF HIS INFERNAL BOND

At the city of Wittemburg there resided a certain young student, of a noble and ancient family, the initials of whose name were N. N. Now this young nobleman was deeply in love with a beautiful lady also of high birth, who happened to have a great number of other lovers. Among these were many lords of the land, but to none of them would that cruel lady grant any return of love. And to none did she show herself so extremely averse as to this same young lord, who was well acquainted with Doctor Faustus, having frequently eaten and drunk at his table. Such, indeed, was the strength of his love, and so great was his disappointment, that he suddenly grew very ill, and pined himself away almost to nothing. When Doctor Faustus perceived that this noble young gentleman was so sadly sickened as to be unable to help himself, he one day asked his demon Mephistopheles what it was that could cause it, and what he could be pining about. The demon then related to him the whole affair, upon which the doctor went to visit the poor young gentleman, and acquainted him with the source of all his suffering, at which the unhappy lover showed great surprise. But Doctor Faustus consoled

him, and said that he must not take it so much to heart, for that he would prove his friend in the matter. Moreover, if he would trust in him, that proud lady should fall to the share of no one but him, and accept his hand with her own good will. And according as the doctor promised, so it happened. For by force of enchantment he softened her heart, and made her fall so desperately in love with this young nobleman, that she wished him never to be out of her sight, and would pay no attention to anybody else. Doctor Faustus informed the young gentleman that he ought to decorate himself in the best style and go to an assembly where the lady would be present, with other young women, all eager to dance, and that he would accompany him. At the same time, he gave him a ring, which he told him he must slip upon her finger as he was dancing with her; upon feeling the touch of which, she would be sure to love and be constant to him, and no one else. But that he would have no need to make any proposal or talk of marriage, as she would be sure to introduce the subject herself. Before they set off to the hall, he sprinkled a few magical drops upon the young man's features, which improved them and his whole appearance very surprisingly. On their arrival he contrived it exactly as the doctor had directed him, and upon touching the ring as she was dancing with her, the young lady suddenly felt her heart transfixed with Cupid's bolts, and she could not obtain a wink of sleep during the whole of that night. Early in the morning she sent a message for him, and declared the everlasting love and attachment which she felt for him, at the same time offering her hand, if he would be her husband. He upon this revealed the passionate affection he had so long felt for her, and taking her at her word, the marriage was shortly afterwards solemnised, to the infinite contentment of both parties. The young nobleman showed great respect to the doctor ever afterwards, and bestowed many presents upon him in consequence.

HEINRICH VON KLEIST

(1715–1759)

THE MARQUISE VON O——

(Translated by Henry Roche)

The Marquise von O——, who was a widow of unblemished reputation with two well-educated children, announced in the papers of M——, an important town of Upper Italy, that in some mysterious way her circumstances had become different; that she wished the father of the child she shortly expected would report himself, and that she would marry him out of consideration for her family. The lady who, under the stress of pressing circumstances, had decided to take this extraordinary step was the daughter of Herr von G——, Governor of the citadel of M——.

About three years before, she had lost her husband, the Marquis von O——, to whom she was tenderly devoted; he had gone to Paris on family business. Yielding to her mother's wish, she had, after his death, left the estate near B——, where she had until then resided, and had returned to her father's house with her two children. Here she had spent some years in strict seclusion, occupying her time with painting, reading, educating her children, and looking after her parents' comfort, until the —— war suddenly filled that part of Italy with troops of various nationalities, including Russians. Colonel von G——, who had received orders to defend the citadel, insisted on his wife and daughter retiring to the latter's estate, or to his son's near B——. But before these ladies had been able to make up their minds whether they would rather undergo the distress of a

siege or brave the horrors they might be exposed to in an open country, the citadel was invested by the Russian troops and ordered to surrender. The Colonel declared, in spite of his family's entreaties, that he would hold out, come what might; and replied with cannon and mortars. The enemy bombarded the fortress, set fire to the magazines, and took possession of an outwork; and as the Governor was slow in answering a second summons to surrender, a night assault was ordered, and the citadel was taken by storm.

Just as the Russian troops rushed in, supported by a terrific cannonade, the left wing of the Governor's residence caught fire and the ladies were forced to make their escape. The Colonel's wife, hurrying after her daughter, who dashed down the stairs with her children, called to her to remain together and take refuge in the cellars; but a shell that at this moment burst on the house caused utter confusion. The Marquise came with both her children on the esplanade before the citadel, where flashes of artillery lit up the darkness of the night, and so terrified them, that, not knowing where to go, they rushed back to the burning building. Just as she was going to escape by the back door, she was unfortunately met by a troop of enemy sharp-shooters, who, on seeing her, ceased fire, hung their muskets over their shoulders, and led her away, making shameful gestures. In vain did the Marquise call to her help her trembling women who were flying back through the gate; she was pushed about by the horrible ruffians, who fought even among themselves. She was dragged to the back yard, where she was about to fall to the ground under the most shameful ill-treatment, when a Russian officer appeared: he had heard the lady's despairing screams, and with furious cuts of his sword he drove away the dogs panting for such a prey. She looked upon him as an angel from heaven. The last of these brutes held the lady's slender form in his arms; the officer struck him in the face with the hilt of his sword and made him reel back with blood gushing out of

his mouth. He then offered her his arm with the politeness of a Frenchman and led her, struck speechless by all she had seen, to the other wing of the residence, which had not been reached by the flames; there she fell quite unconscious. When her terrified women rushed in, he told them to call a doctor, and assuring them that anyway she would soon recover, he put his shako on and returned to the field.

Not long afterwards the citadel was taken, and the Governor, who went on fighting because no quarter was granted to him, was retiring with his dwindling forces towards the door of his residence, when the Russian officer, whose features betrayed the utmost excitement, came out of the house and called upon him to surrender. The Governor replied that he was only waiting for this summons, handed him his sword and asked for permission to enter the house in order to look after his family. The officer, who seemed chief in command, granted him this permission under an escort, placed himself hurriedly at the head of a detachment, stopped the fighting where it was necessary, and manned in all haste the strongest points of the citadel. Soon after he returned to the parade-ground and ordered his men to subdue the raging flames. Seeing that his order was not carried out with sufficient zeal, he himself gave the example, exerting himself to the utmost: hose in hand he climbed up among the burning gables, directing the spurt himself; and, to the astonishment of the bewildered Asiatic hordes, he entered the magazines and rolled out powder-casks and live shells. Meanwhile the Governor had gone in, and was quite upset on hearing of the misfortune that had befallen his daughter. The Marquise, who had entirely recovered, without any doctor's help, as the officer had said she would, was delighted to see all her people safe and sound. To avoid their unnecessary attentions she kept in bed and assured her father that she only wished to get up in order to express her gratitude to her saviour. She had already been apprised that he was Count F——, Lieut.-

Colonel of the T. rifle corps, Knight of an Order of Merit, and of several other Orders. She earnestly requested her father to entreat him not to leave the citadel without having shown himself at the house for a moment. The Governor, respecting his daughter's feeling, betook himself at once to the fortress and made known to the officer his grateful daughter's desire. He had found him on the ramparts, going about everywhere giving orders and visiting his wounded men: that was his opportunity. The Count assured him that he was only waiting for the moment when he could cease attending to his duties to go and pay her his respects. He had been anxious to obtain news of the Marquise's condition, but the reports of several officers had hurried him back to the bustle of the field.

At daybreak the General of the Russian army arrived and inspected the fortress. He expressed his regret to the unfortunate Governor, was sorry that good luck had not rewarded his courage, and gave him leave to go wherever he liked on parole. The Governor assured him of his gratitude and declared how much he was indebted to the Russians in general and to the young Count F——, Lieut.-Colonel of the T. rifle corps in particular. The General inquired what had happened, and was highly indignant when informed of the criminal attack upon the lady. He ordered the Count to come forward, and after praising his noble conduct in a few words, which compliment made the officer blush, he concluded by ordering him to shoot the shameless fellows who had dishonoured the Czar's name "Who are they?" he asked. Count F—— replied confusedly that it was impossible for him to give their names, as he could not have recognised them by the feeble light of the lamps of the Castle yard. The General, who had been informed that the residence was in flames at the time, expressed astonishment and observed that it was possible, even in the dark, to recognise people by their voices; and seeing the Count shrug his shoulders in confusion, he ordered

him to inquire into the matter at once and with the utmost rigour. At this moment a man, pressing forward from behind, announced that one of the scoundrels, wounded by the Count, had been found lying in the hall of the house and had been taken into custody by the Governor's servants, who still held him prisoner. The General ordered this man to be brought before him under guard, and after a summary trial, he commanded that the whole gang, five in number, whose names the wounded soldier had given, should be shot forthwith. When this was done, the General, after leaving a small garrison in the fortress, ordered the disbandment of the remaining troops. The officers had to hurry to their respective corps. The Count, disappointed by this order, came up to the Governor and regretted that in the circumstances he would not be able to go and pay his respects to the Marquise. Less than an hour later not a Russian remained in the citadel.

The family now considered how they might on a future occasion give the Count some token of their gratitude. They were agonised by the news that on the very day he had left the citadel he had been killed in an encounter with enemy troops. The messenger who had brought the news to M——, had seen him with his own eyes carried to P——, shot fatally through the chest. There he had expired, according to a trustworthy report, while he was being put down by the bearers. The Governor, who had gone in person to the post-house in order to get details of the unhappy occurrence, was informed that the Count, when he had been shot on the battlefield, had exclaimed: "Julietta, this shot avenges thee!" after which his lips were closed for ever. The Marquise could not console herself for having missed the opportunity of throwing herself at his feet. She reproached herself bitterly for having been too modest to invite him to the residence, and she pitied the unfortunate lady who bore her name, to whom he had given his last thought. In vain did she try to find out her address so as to inform her of the

dreadful news, and several months elapsed before she herself could forget the sad occurrence.

The family had soon after to leave the Governor's residence, which was to be occupied by the Russian General. At first they had thought of betaking themselves to the Governor's country estate, to which plan the Marquise inclined; but as her father did not like the place, the family retired to a house in town and made arrangements to live there permanently. Everything then reverted to its former routine. The Marquise occupied herself again with the education of her children, so long interrupted, and had recourse to painting and reading as a recreation. But all at once this lady, who had always been the goddess of health, saw herself subject to repeated indispositions which made her for weeks incapable of attending to her family. She was sick, turned giddy, fainted and could not explain the cause of her extraordinary condition. One morning as they sat at breakfast, and the Colonel had left the room for a moment, the Marquise said to her mother, as if awaking from a long state of unconsciousness: "If a woman were to tell me that she had felt as I did just now when I took up my cup, I would certainly think that she was in a very interesting condition."—"I do not understand," replied the mother. The Marquise tried to explain that she had felt just as she had done before her second daughter was born. Frau von G—— replied laughingly that her daughter was perhaps going to give birth to Fancy. "Then would Morpheus be her father, or one of the Dreams that accompany him," retorted the Marquise, as a joke. When the Colonel returned the conversation was interrupted; the subject was entirely forgotten when, a few days after, the Marquise had entirely recovered her health. Not long afterwards, while the family, including the Governor's son, who was Ranger on the estate, were assembled, a valet announced the astounding news that Count F—— had come to see them. "Count F——!" exclaimed father and daughter

together, the others remaining dumb from astonishment. The valet assured them there was no mistake, and that the Count was waiting in the antechamber. The Governor sprang up to open the door, when the Count, as handsome as a young god, but somewhat pale, walked in. When they had got over their intense surprise, and the Count had assured them, in reply to the parents' objection that he was dead, that he was very much alive, he turned, full of emotion, towards the Marquise, and the first thing he asked her was how she was. She answered that she was very well; she only wished to know how he had come back to life. But he, persisting in his inquiry, replied that she was not speaking the truth, as her face showed signs of extreme fatigue; he must be much mistaken or she was indisposed and suffering. The Marquise, pleased with the kindness of his remarks, answered: "Well then, this fatigue you notice may be the vestige of an indisposition I suffered from a few weeks ago, and which I hope will have no further consequences."—"As do I!" he replied, with unbounded joy, and he abruptly asked her if she would marry him. The Marquise did not know what to think of such behaviour. Her mother blushed deeply and looked with embarrassment at her husband and son. Meanwhile the Count advanced towards the Marquise and seizing her hand as if to kiss it, repeated: "Will you marry me? Have you understood?" The Governor requested him to sit down, and with much kindness, yet with a certain seriousness, offered him a chair. "We shall believe," said his wife, "that you are a ghost until you explain how you have risen from the grave in which you were buried at P——." The Count sat down, letting go the lady's hand, and answered that, pressed by his engagements, he must say but few words. He had been brought to P—— shot through the chest; he had despaired of his life for several months, during which the Marquise had been his only thought; he could not describe the anxiety, the sorrow he had been through with regard to his

hopes. After his recovery he had returned to the army, where he had found no rest. He had several times taken up a pen to unbosom himself to the Colonel and the Marquise; but he had been suddenly sent to Naples with dispatches; he was not sure if he would be ordered to go on to Constantinople, he might even have to go to St. Petersburg. Meanwhile it was impossible for him to live any longer without clearing the way towards his heart's fond goal. He had been unable to resist the desire to make some advance towards it while passing through M——. In short, he could not refrain from saying how he yearned to be made happy by obtaining the hand of the Marquise, and he therefore implored them, with the utmost respect and sincerity, to be so good as to give him an answer. "Your offer," said the Governor after a long pause, "is most flattering, and I do not doubt its sincerity. But after the death of the Marquis von O——, her husband, my daughter determined never to marry again" Yet, as the Count had lately inspired her with such feelings of gratitude, it was not impossible that her resolution might give way in favour of his wishes. He therefore begged him to grant her a delay to think the matter over at leisure. The Count replied that this kind explanation encouraged all his hopes In other circumstances it would have made him perfectly happy; but he regretted to say that it did not quieten his anxiety. Pressing reasons, that it was impossible for him to explain, had made it urgent for him to obtain a more definite answer. He added that the carriage which was to take him to Naples was standing at the door, and he implored them, if any voice in that house could speak for him—at which words he looked at the Marquise—not to let him set out on his journey without a favourable answer. The Governor, somewhat surprised at this behaviour, told him that although his daughter's gratitude permitted him certain hopes, he had presumed rather too much. She could not take a step on which depended her future happiness without

proper consideration. Before she came to a decision it was absolutely necessary that their acquaintance should ripen. He therefore invited the Count to return to M—— after the conclusion of his journey, and to be his guest for a time. Not until the Marquise told him she hoped to be happy with the Count could he recognise with joy that she had given her definite answer. The Count declared, a blush rising to his face, that during his whole journey he had foreseen the dashing of his impatient hopes; that he had been thrown into the profoundest grief. But forced to play at present such a disagreeable part, he agreed that further acquaintance would be desirable; it was clearly his right to defend his reputation, if this most uncertain of all treasures should be called in question; he had come to make amends for the worst act he had ever committed, of which no one knew anything—in short, he was an honourable man, and begged that his word should be accepted in all sincerity. The Governor replied with a smile, without a trace of irony, that he believed him. He had never come across a young man who in so short a time had shown so many excellent traits of character. He was almost convinced that a short interval for consideration would overcome any hesitation. Yet, before he had held consultation with his own family, as well as with the Count's relations, no other decision could be come to. Hereupon the Count declared that he had lost his parents and was quite free. His uncle was General K——, on whose consent he relied. To which he added that he enjoyed a considerable income and would easily make up his mind to settle in Italy. The Governor bowed politely, and once more spoke out quite clearly, giving him to understand that he was not to proceed with his addresses before the termination of his journey. The Count, after a short pause, during which he gave many signs of the greatest uneasiness, said, turning to the mother, that he had done his utmost not to be entrusted with this business of his journey, and to persuade the General-

in-Chief and General K——, his uncle, to relieve him; but that they had replied this errand would be the best means of making him shake off the melancholy caused by his late illness, from which he would now suffer more than ever. The family hardly knew what to say. The Count, rubbing his forehead, told them that if there were any hope of getting nearer the goal he aimed at, he would put off his departure for a day and even more, and he gazed in turn at the Governor, the Marquise and her mother. The Governor, displeased, looked down in silence. "Proceed on your journey to Naples, proceed, Count," said his wife, "and on your return give us the pleasure of your company, and all will come right." The Count remained seated for a moment and seemed to be thinking what he had best do, then he got up, putting his chair aside. "As I must admit," he said, "that the hopes with which I entered this house were somewhat precipitate, and as the family insists on our further acquaintance, which I am far from blaming them for, I shall send back the dispatches to headquarters at Z—— for them to be dealt with in another way, and I now accept your kind invitation to be your guest for a few weeks." At these words, with his hand resting on the chair, he stood for a moment against the wall, his eyes fixed on the Governor. The latter replied that he would be very sorry if the love which he appeared to have for his daughter brought upon him any serious consequences; the Count must make up his mind what to do or not to do, send back the dispatches and betake himself to the rooms he was to occupy, or proceed on his journey. The Count's face reddened at these words, he kissed the mother's hand with respect, bowed to the others, and withdrew.

When he had left the room, the family were at a loss what to make of all this. The mother said it was not possible that he should think of returning to Z—— papers he was entrusted with for Naples, merely because he had failed on his journey through M—— to obtain a promise of

marriage after five minutes' conversation with a lady he hardly knew. The Ranger opined that such free-and-easy behaviour would be punished with nothing less than imprisonment in a fortress. "And dismissal into the bargain," put in the Governor. "However, that is not too dangerous. It was merely a mad idea, and he will have come to his senses before sending those papers back." The mother, on hearing of the danger, was very much afraid that he would risk it. His impetuous will, urging him on towards his goal, would, she thought, make him act this very way. She requested the Ranger to go after him at once in order to dissuade him from an act likely to be fraught with such ill consequences. The Ranger replied that his interference would produce the contrary effect, and strengthen him in the hope of succeeding by this stratagem. The Marquise was of the same opinion, adding that her brother alone could persuade the Count, who would rather risk anything than make a fool of himself.

All agreed that his behaviour was most extraordinary and that he seemed an adept at conquering ladies' hearts by storm as well as citadels. Thereupon the Governor noticed the Count's carriage before the door. He called the family to the window, and asked a bewildered valet who came in if the Count was still in the house. He replied that the Count was in the servants' hall with an adjutant, writing letters and sealing up parcels. The Governor, mastering his excitement, hurried downstairs with his son, and asked the Count if he would not come to his room, where the tables were more convenient for such work, and if he could do anything else for him. The Count expressed his thanks and went on writing. Then he said his work was done, and sealing the parcels asked what time it was, and giving them to the adjutant, he wished him God speed. The Governor, who could not believe his eyes, said to the Count, as the adjutant left the room: "Sir, unless you have very weighty reasons——"—"Decisive reasons!" inter-

rupted the Count, and he accompanied the officer to the carriage and opened the door for him.—"In this case," continued the Governor, "I would at least send the dispatches on to . . ."—"Impossible!" interrupted the Count, as he helped the officer to his seat. "The papers are of no use in Naples without me. I had had the same thought as yourself. Drive off!"—"And your uncle's letters?" called the adjutant, putting his head out of the window.—"They will reach me at M——," was the reply.—"Drive on," said the adjutant, and off the carriage rolled.

Count F——, turning towards the Governor, asked him kindly to direct him to his room. "I will have the honour to take you there myself," said the distracted Colonel, and ordered his servants and the Count's to look after the luggage while he conducted his guest to the apartments reserved for friends, where he left him rather coldly. The Count dressed himself in order to go and take leave of the Commanding Officer of the fortress, and for the rest of the day he did not show himself at the house, to which he only returned in the evening just before dinner.

The family meanwhile had been a prey to the greatest anxiety. The Ranger told them how sharply the Count had replied to the Governor's representations; he added that his behaviour had revealed a well-considered plan of action; his post-haste wooing must have some cause. "I can make no head nor tail of it," said the Governor, and he bade his family not to mention the subject again in his presence. The mother went continually to the window to see if he did not return to express repentance for his hair-brained act, and make up for it. At last, when darkness had set in, she sat down by her daughter, who was busy working at a table, seeming anxious to avoid all conversation. While the father walked up and down, the mother asked her, loud enough to be overheard, how all this would end. The Marquise replied, with a bashful look towards her father: "All would be well if Father had induced him

to proceed to Naples."—"To Naples!" exclaimed the Governor. "Ought I to have called for a priest to marry you, or should I have had him arrested and sent to Naples under guard?"—"No," said the Marquise, "but urgent, pressing remonstrances produce their effect," and again she looked down on her work somewhat unwillingly. Night had set in, and the Count appeared at last. They all expected that after the first salutations the subject would be broached anew, so that they could renew the attack with their united forces, and induce him if possible to retrieve his rash act. Vain was their hope: during the whole dinner, wilfully avoiding everything that could lead to the subject, the Count talked to the Governor about the war, and to his son about hunting. On his mentioning the fight at P—— in which he had been wounded, the mother questioned him about his illness, asking how he had got on in that little town, and if he had found every convenience there. He related several interesting incidents of his illness: he had constantly seen the Marquise sitting at his bedside; in his feverish delirium she had always appeared to him in the shape of a certain swan that he had seen as a boy on his uncle's estate. He had remembered with emotion how he had once thrown mud at the bird; but the swan had plunged and had risen again as white as snow; she herself had always swum about on flaming waters, and he had called out to Thinka, which was the swan's name, but he had not been able to embrace it, however willing it might have been to come to him. He suddenly declared, with a deep blush, that he was passionately fond of her, then looked down on his plate and resumed silence. At last they had to rise from table, and the Count, after a few words with the mother, refused further conversation with them and retired to his room. The company stood wondering what it all meant. "We must let matters take their course," said the Governor. "The Count must probably have acted reckoning on his relations' influence so as to avoid disgrace."

—"What do you think of him?" Frau von G—— asked her daughter. "Could you not say something to avert a catastrophe?"—"Dearest mother," replied the Marquise, "I could not. I am sorry to see my gratitude put to such a test. But I had determined not to marry again; I do not wish to risk my happiness a second time without due reflection."—"If you are so determined," rejoined her brother, "your fixed resolution might have opened his eyes: a definite reply seems to me imperative."—"This young man," rejoined the mother, "who has so many good qualities, declared himself ready to live in Italy; it seems to me that his offer deserves some consideration and that she might change her mind."—The Ranger, sitting down by his sister, asked her how she liked his appearance.—"He pleases *and* displeases me," said the Marquise with some reluctance, and she appealed to the opinion of her relatives.—"When he returns from Naples," said her mother, "and our inquiries about him are found not to be in contradiction with the general impression he has made on you, supposing he repeats his offer, what answer would you give?"—"In such a case," replied the Marquise, "as he appears to be so passionate"—there she hesitated and her eyes glistened—"I would meet his wishes for the sake of the gratitude I owe him." Her mother, who had always wished her daughter to marry again, had some trouble to conceal her joy at this declaration, and pondered over the possible outcome of the affair. The Ranger rose from his chair much agitated, and said that if the Marquise had any thought of making the Count happy, they must immediately take steps to avert the consequences of his rash conduct. His mother concurred, and asserted that, after all, the risk was not too great; as he had shown such excellent qualities on the night of the storming of the fortress by the Russians, it was hardly to be feared that the rest of his life would give these qualities the lie. The Marquise looked down with signs of great emotion. "You might," continued her

mother, seizing her daughter's hand, "make a promise that you will not entertain any other engagement until his return from Naples."—"That promise I can give him," replied the Marquise. "But I am afraid that he will not be quieted thereby, and that matters will only become more complicated."—"That is my business," said the mother, elated with joy, and she looked around the room for her husband. "Lorenzo! what is your opinion?" she asked, ready to leave her chair. The Governor, who had heard all, stood at the window in silence and looking down the street. "I pledge myself," cried the Ranger, "that with her formal promise I will get the Count out of the house."—"Do it! Do it!" cried the father, turning round. "I shall have to surrender to this Russian a second time!" At this the mother sprang up, kissed him and her daughter, and asked, while the Governor smiled at her excitement, how the promise could be notified to the Count without delay. On the Ranger's proposal they determined to request him to join the family if he were not yet undressed. The Count sent back the answer that he would have the honour to be with them presently. Hardly had the valet returned with this message when the Count hurried into the room as quickly as if joy had supplied his feet with wings. Showing signs of extreme emotion, he fell at the Marquise's feet. The Governor was going to speak, but the Count, rising, declared he knew all that was necessary, kissed both father's and mother's hands, embraced the brother and begged of them to let him have a travelling carriage as soon as possible. "I do but fear, Count," said the Marquise in spite of her emotion, "that you have been too much encouraged by hopes so suddenly . . ."—"No, no!" answered the Count, "all remains undecided, as the information you will receive may not correspond to the sentiments which have brought me back to you in this room." On hearing these words the Governor embraced him heartily, the Ranger offered him his own coach, a

servant flew to the post to order horses at a premium, and the departure elicited more joy than was ever shown at an arrival. "I hope," said the Count, "to intercept the dispatches at B——, whence I shall proceed to Naples by a shorter cut than through M——. There I shall do my utmost to get relieved of the further journey to Constantinople. If the worst happens, I shall pretend to be ill, and unless I am detained by insurmountable obstacles, I shall infallibly return to M—— in about four to six weeks." His servant then announced that the coach was at the door, ready to start. The Count took his hat, went up to the Marquise, and took her hand. "Julietta," he said, "I now feel somewhat quieted," and he placed his hand in hers. "It had been my dearest wish to be united to you before my departure"—"United!" exclaimed all the members of the family—"Yes!" repeated the Count, as he kissed the Marquise's hand and replied, when she asked him if he was in his senses. "A day will come when you will understand me!" The family felt inclined to be angry; but he took leave of them all in the friendliest manner, begged them not to think any more of what he had said, and set out on his journey.

Several weeks elapsed, during which very different opinions were expressed on the outcome of this extraordinary affair. The Governor received a polite letter from the Count's uncle, General K——, the Count himself wrote from Naples; the information they had sought proved rather to his advantage—in short, the engagement appeared as good as made, when the indisposition of the Marquise became more serious than it had yet been She noticed a change in her person she could not account for. She candidly disclosed her condition to her mother, telling her she did not know what to think of it. The mother, much concerned for her daughter's health in consequence of her abnormal state, advised her to call in a doctor. To this the Marquise objected, hoping that her constitution would

carry her through. She suffered agonies for several days, still neglecting her mother's advice, until she was thoroughly upset by unusual sensations which constantly recurred. The doctor, who enjoyed her father's confidence, was called. While her mother was away she made him sit down upon the divan, and after a short introductory speech, told him jokingly what she thought of her condition. The doctor looked at her with searching eye, remained silent a certain time after having made his examination, and then said with a very serious air that the Marquise had diagnosed her case very correctly. The lady asked him what he meant. He made himself quite clear and added, with a smile he could hardly repress, that her health was excellent and required no doctor's services. The Marquise, having looked hard at him sideways, rang the bell and gave him leave to retire, while she said to herself quite loud enough for him to hear, as if that were of no consequence: "I do not care to joke with him about such matters." To which he retorted sharply: "I wish she had always had as little taste for jokes as at present," took his hat and stick and prepared to go. The Marquise said she would report his insults to her father. The doctor rejoined that he would maintain his verdict in a court of law, opened the door, made a bow and was about to leave the room. While he picked up a glove he had dropped, the Marquise inquired: "How is it possible, doctor?"—"There is no necessity to explain to you how it came about," replied the doctor, and after bowing a second time he went away. The Marquise stood as if thunderstruck; then she composed herself and thought of hurrying to her father; but she seemed paralysed by the earnestness of the man who had, as she thought, insulted her. She threw herself down on the divan in the greatest excitement. Mistrusting her own self, she tried to recall every moment of the past year, and thinking over what had happened lately, she concluded that she had gone mad. Her mother came in and asked, to her amazement, why she was so

upset. The Marquise told her all the doctor had said. Frau von G—— exclaimed that he was an impudent, contemptible fellow and encouraged her daughter's resolution to apprise her father of the insult. The Marquise assured her that he had been in thorough earnest and had appeared determined to throw his mad assertion in her father's face. The mother, not a little terrified, inquired if she believed in the possibility of her being in such a condition. "I would rather believe that tombs were going to produce fruit, or that a dead body would give birth to a child!" replied the Marquise.—"Darling, wonderful creature," said the mother, "what is then the cause of your agitation? If you are conscious of your innocence, how can the opinion of a doctor or of a whole consultation of doctors trouble you? Whether he made a mistake or asked from mere malice is quite immaterial. The proper thing is to speak to your father."—"Good God!" cried the Marquise, convulsively, "how shall I ever allay my anxiety? Have I not against me my own inner feeling, that feeling I know only too well? If another person experienced the same, would I not come to the same conclusion as the doctor?"—"Horrible!" exclaimed Frau von G——.—"Malice! Mistake!" cried the Marquise, "this man who until to-day appeared worthy of respect, what reasons can he have to vilify me so wilfully, so basely? Have I ever been uncivil to him? Did I not receive him with confidence, thinking only of future gratitude towards him? Did he not by his honest, unsophisticated words seem to have come to help me, rather than to give me greater pain than I have ever experienced before? And if I were forced to choose," she continued, while her mother looked at her unmoved, "if I believed he had made a mistake, is it possible that a doctor, even of ordinary capacity, could misjudge such a case as mine?"—"It must be one or the other," replied Frau von G—— rather sharply.—"Indeed it must, my dearest mother," answered the Marquise, her face glowing with

emotion as she kissed her parent's hand, "it must indeed! Although the symptoms are so bewildering you must allow me to have my doubts. As I owe you this solemn declaration, I swear I am as innocent as my children; their conscience cannot be purer than mine, I swear it to the most respected of mothers. And yet I beg of you to have a midwife sent for, to convince myself of my true state, and I shall be quieted, whatever conclusion she may come to."—"A midwife!" exclaimed Frau von G—— in despair, "a clear conscience and a midwife!" and she remained speechless.—"A midwife, dearest mother," she repeated, falling down on her knees, "and quickly too, or I shall go mad."—"You shall have one, but I request you not to be confined under my roof." Thereupon she got up and was about to leave the room. The Marquise followed her with outstretched arms, fell down on her face and embraced her mother's knees. "Do not abandon me at this awful moment," she cried in her eloquent grief; "if a blameless life, a life of which you have been the pattern, gives me a right to your respect, if any motherly feeling still speaks for me in your heart, believe me until my guilt has been made as clear as noonday."—"Why, then, this agitation?" rejoined the mother. "Is it only about the doctor's opinion? Is it only due to that particular feeling?"—"Nothing more," she replied with her hand on her heart.—"Nothing, Julietta?" the mother continued, "try and think! However deeply I might be grieved to hear it, a false step would be pardonable, and in the end I should have to forgive you; but if, in order to escape my indignation, you invented a story irreconcilable with the order of nature, and piled up blasphemous oaths to deceive my confidence in you, that would indeed be abominable and I could never trust you again."—"May God's kingdom be as open to me some day as my heart is open to you now, mother. I have not hidden anything from you." These pathetic words quite overcame Frau von G——. "Oh, heavens!" she cried,

"my darling child, how sorry I am!" She lifted her daughter up, kissed her and pressed her to her bosom. "There is nothing in all the world for you to fear. Come, you are very ill, I must put you to bed." But the Marquise, with eyes full of tears, assured her she was quite well and that nothing was the matter with her except her astounding, inconceivable condition.—"Condition!" repeated the mother, "what condition? If your memory of the past is so certain, what a fearful fancy has overcome you! Are you not deceived by this feeling, this vague feeling of yours?" —"No, no, I am not deceived! If you will have the midwife called, you will hear from her lips that I am really in an awful, exhausted state."—"Come, my dearest," said Frau von G——, who was beginning to fear for her daughter's reason, "come, follow me and get you to bed. What *can* you think the doctor meant? Your face is all aglow, you are all of a tremble. What could the doctor have told you?" and she led her away, more than ever doubting the scene which her daughter had related. "Dearest angel of a mother," said the Marquise, smiling between her tears, "I am perfectly sane in mind. He told me that I was soon to be a mother. Pray get me the midwife, and if she declares it is not true, I shall find peace."—"Very well, very well," said Frau von G——, overcoming her anxiety, "she shall come at once, and if you want her to laugh at you, she will tell you there and then that you are a dreamer and not quite right in your mind." She then rang the bell and forthwith sent a servant for the midwife.

The Marquise, trembling with emotion, still lay in her mother's arms, when the woman appeared. Frau von G—— told her of the course of her daughter's illness as explained by her. She had sworn that there had been no misconduct on her part, and yet, deceived by some inexplicable feeling, she insisted on being examined by an experienced midwife. The latter, on receiving this information, alluded to the warmth of young blood and to the cunning of men. After

she had made the examination she said that she had seen similar cases. All young widows who found themselves in that predicament pretended they had lived in lonely islands. She tried to calm the Marquise and told her that the gay corsair who had landed in the night would soon reappear. At these words the Marquise fainted away. The mother, in spite of her emotion, succeeded in bringing her to her senses with the help of the midwife, and then she again broke out angrily "Julietta!" she exclaimed with the utmost sorrow, "will you confess the truth and tell me the father's name?" She seemed still inclined to indulgence But as the Marquise reiterated that she was going mad and left the divan, her mother called to her: "Go, go! You deserve contempt! Cursed be the hour when you were born!" and angrily left the room.

The Marquise, feeling that she would again faint away, drew the midwife to her and, trembling violently, laid her head on the woman's shoulder. She inquired in broken tones when nature was likely to have her way, and asked if it was possible to keep a birth secret. The woman smiled and said it would not be necessary in her case.—"No, no!" exclaimed the Marquise. "I only sought for information, I only wished to know generally if such a condition as mine is possible according to nature." To which came the reply that to no woman on earth had such a miracle happened except to the blessed Virgin. The Marquise trembled more and more violently; she feared she might be surprised at any moment, and clinging tightly to her, implored her not to go away. The midwife comforted her by saying that there was still plenty of time, told her by what means the world's remarks could be avoided; that all would come right. But although these consolations pierced the unfortunate lady's heart, she became calmer, said she felt better and gave the woman leave to retire.

Hardly was she out of the room when a note was brought to the Marquise from her mother who expressed herself

thus: "Herr von G—— desires that in the circumstances the Marquise shall leave the house. He sends herewith the papers relating to her income and hopes that God will spare him the distress of seeing her again." The letter showed traces of tears and in a corner could still be distinguished the word *dictatéd*. The Marquise burst into sobs, and bewailing her parents' error and the mistaken opinions which had deceived these excellent people, she betook herself to her mother's room, where she was told that the lady was with her father. She staggered to her father's apartment and finding the door locked, she sank down before it, moaning and calling on all the saints to witness that she was innocent. She might have lain there a few minutes, when her brother came out of the room and told her in a fury that it was the Governor's will not to see her. "Dearest brother," she cried out, sobbing bitterly,—and as she penetrated into the room,—"best of fathers!" and she held out her arms towards him. The Governor turned his back on her and hurried into his bedroom. As she followed him, he called out: "Go away!" and made to slam the door in her face; but it was too late. She moaned and entreated him to shoot her, and as she entered he ran to the wall, opposite where he remained with his back to her. She fell down at his feet and, trembling all the while, embraced his knees. He tried to seize a pistol that hung on the wall: it went off and pierced the counterpane. The Marquise, terrified, rose from her knees as pale as death and rushed from her father's apartment to her own room, ordered her coach and sat down exhausted. The children were dressed in haste and her effects packed up. She put a wrap round her little girl's neck as she stood between her knees. Everything being ready, she was about to get into the coach, when her brother reappeared, and by order of his father summoned her to give up the children and leave them behind. "My children!" she exclaimed, rising; "tell your unnatural father that he may come and

shoot me, but that he shall not tear my children from me!" Then, armed with all the pride of innocence, she carried them to the carriage and drove off without her brother daring to stop her.

This fine effort had made her conscious of her strength: suddenly, by her own exertion, she had risen from the depths into which fate had plunged her. Now she was in the open, her terrible excitement subsided. She repeatedly kissed her children, whom she considered her booty, and she thought with great self-satisfaction of the victory she had won over her brother, owing to her assurance that she was blameless. Her reason, which had not given way under all her sufferings, now bowed to the great, holy, mysterious ways of Providence. She plainly saw that it was useless to try to convince her family of her innocence; that she must accept the situation unless she consented to be crushed. A few days after she had arrived at B—— her grief vanished with the heroic resolution she had taken proudly to arm herself against the world's attacks. She determined to commune entirely with herself, to devote herself with the utmost zeal to the education of her two children and to give all her motherly care to the third which God had given her. She made plans to restore to prosperity, in a few weeks after her confinement, her beautiful estate, that during her lengthened absence had been somewhat neglected. Sitting in an arbour while she knitted little caps and stockings for little legs, she mused over the comfortable arrangement of the rooms, some of which would be provided with books, while others would be used for painting. The date at which Count F—— was to return from Naples had not been reached before she was quite reconciled to her lot, which was to live in cloistral seclusion. The porter received orders not to let anyone into the house. Only one thought worried her: the child which in her innocence and purity she would give birth to, whose origin, because it was mysterious, seemed to her holier than that of other people's

children, would bear a mark of shame in the eyes of society. She had imagined a strange stratagem to discover its father; so terrified was she when she first thought of it, that she let fall her knitting. She tried through long sleepless nights to accustom herself to the thought that was killing her. She persisted in her efforts to get into contact with the man who had so deceived her, although she really believed that he could only be a man of the lowest type. But as she became more and more conscious of her independence and felt that a gem loses none of its value, whatever the value of the mounting it is set in, one morning when the young life moved within her, she plucked up her courage and published in the papers of M—— the extraordinary notice the reader was made acquainted with at the beginning of this story.

Count F——, who had been kept in Naples by unavoidable business, had written a second time to the Marquise requesting her to remain faithful to the promise if he were delayed a little longer by various engagements. As soon as he had succeeded in getting relieved from the further journey to Constantinople, and was freed from the other obligations, he left Naples and arrived at M—— only a few days after the date he had fixed. The Governor received him with embarrassment, pretended that important business called him away, and told his son to entertain the Count until his return The Ranger took him to his room and asked him, after a cursory salutation, if he had heard of what had occurred in his father's house since he had left it. The Count, suddenly turning pale, said he had not. The Ranger informed him of the shame the Marquise had brought on the family, and related to him what the reader already knows. The Count struck his forehead with his hand. "Why did they put so many obstacles in the way!" he cried, without alluding to his own behaviour. "If we had been allowed to marry, we should have been spared both disgrace and misery." The Ranger, staring at him, asked him if he was so mad as to wish he had married such

an unworthy creature. The Count replied that she was more worthy of respect than all those who despised her. He believed absolutely that she was as spotless as she had declared, and he would go to B—— this very day and renew his offer of marriage. Thereupon he seized his hat, took leave of the Ranger, who looked upon him as one gone crazy, and hurried out.

He mounted his horse and galloped towards B——. On alighting at the gate, he was going to enter the court-yard, but was told by the porter that the Marquise did not receive a single soul. The Count asked him if this order which concerned strangers was to be obeyed for a friend of the house The porter replied that he knew of no exception, and added, rather doubtfully: "Are you perhaps Count F——?" "No," answered the Count with a searching look, and adroitly told his servant, so that the porter might hear, that under the circumstances he would go to an inn and write to the Marquise announcing his arrival. As soon as he was out of the porter's sight, he turned round a corner and followed the wall of a long garden that extended behind the mansion. He entered through a gate he found open, walked up a path, and was ascending the steps to the house when he espied in an arbour on his left the charming and mysterious Marquise busily occupied at a small table. He approached unnoticed until he stood at the entrance to the arbour only three short steps from her. "Count F——!" she exclaimed on raising her eyes, while she blushed with surprise. The Count smiled, and after hesitating a moment he sat down by her side in the quietest manner possible, so as not to frighten her, and put his arm softly round her waist before she had time to decide what to do in so unwonted a situation. "Where do you come from? How came you here, Count?" asked the Marquise, looking down bashfully.—"From M——," he replied, gently drawing her to his side. "I came through a back gate I found open, and relying on your forgiveness I walked in."—"Did they not

tell you at M——," she continued, remaining motionless in his arms, "that . . .?"—"They told me everything, dearest," he replied, "but as I was certain it is false . . ."—"What!" she exclaimed, rising and loosening herself from his embrace, "you come here in spite of them?"—"In spite of the whole world!" he rejoined, holding her fast, "in spite of your family, in spite of your charming self," and he kissed her passionately.—"Go away!" she cried.—"I am as convinced of your innocence, Julietta," he continued, "as if I were omniscient, as if my soul lived in your heart."—"Leave me!" repeated the Marquise. Still holding her fast, he said: "I come to offer you marriage once more and to receive heavenly happiness from you if you will hear my prayer"—"Leave me at once! I insist upon it!" she concluded, as she tore herself away and ran off.—"My beloved, my angel!" he whispered as he got up and followed her.—"You have heard!" she cried, turning away and escaping from him.—"One single, secret whisper," implored the Count, and he suddenly seized the smooth arm that slipped out of his grasp—"I will not hear a word," she replied, pushed him away from her, hurried up the steps and disappeared

He was already half up the steps, determined to obtain a hearing at any cost, when the door was slammed and the bolt was hastily drawn He remained irresolute for a moment, hesitating whether he would climb in by a window he saw open and try once more to persuade her. But however distressing he felt it to have to turn back, he was forced to yield to necessity, and bitterly regretting that he had let her slip out of his arms, he stole down the steps and left the garden to go in search of his horses. He saw that his attempt to declare his sentiments to her personally had been an irretrievable failure, and he rode along at a slow pace, revolving in his mind what he would write to the family at M——, the only thing that remained for him to do.

In the evening, when he left the table d'hote sick at heart, he met the Ranger, who at once asked him if he had been successful in his visit to B——.—"No," he replied curtly, and thought of breaking off with him without ceremony. But a moment after, not to offend him, he added: "I have made up my mind to write to her so that the matter may soon be cleared up."—"I regret to see," said the Ranger, "that your passion for her has deprived you of all reason. I cannot let you ignore that she has made another choice." Whereupon he rang for the latest papers and handed him the one which contained the notice relating to her child's father. The Count read it through, blood rushing to his face. His feelings had undergone a change. "Do you think she will find the man?" asked the Ranger.—"Without doubt!" said the Count, looking intently over the paper as if devouring its contents Then he added, after folding it up and going to the window. "Now all is right! Now I know what I have to do." He turned round and asked the Ranger in a friendly tone if he would soon see him again, took his leave and went away quite reconciled to his fate.

Lively scenes had been witnessed meanwhile in the Governor's house His wife was very bitter on account of his violence and her weakness in submitting to his tyrannical expulsion of their daughter On hearing the report of the pistol fired in his bedroom, and on seeing the Marquise rush out, she had fainted away. When she recovered he only said that he was sorry she had been frightened for nothing, and that he had thrown the discharged pistol on the table. Later on, when they talked about claiming the children, she timidly declared that they had no right to make such a claim. She begged in a weak and trembling tone that violent scenes might be avoided. The Governor, without replying, and foaming at the mouth, cried to the Ranger: "Go! Fetch her back." When Count F——'s second letter had arrived, the Governor had ordered a

messenger to take it to the Marquise at B——. They heard from the man later on that she had put it aside saying no more than: "All right." Frau von G——, who had been left in the dark with regard to many incidents, especially with regard to the Marquise's intention to contract another marriage without any particular inclination, attempted in vain to bring up the conversation on this question. But the Governor had always peremptorily forbidden them to broach the subject. On one occasion he had taken down her portrait which hung on the wall and declared that he wished to forget her for ever, saying that now he had no daughter. Then had appeared the Marquise's article. Frau von G——, surprised to the utmost, went to her husband's room, found him working at his table, and asked him what he thought of it. He went on writing, simply remarking that she was innocent. "What!" cried his wife with the greatest astonishment, "innocent?"—"She did it in her sleep," he continued, without raising his eyes.—"In her sleep!" rejoined his wife, "such a dreadful thing would only . . ."—"Idiot!" exclaimed the Governor, and putting down the paper, he left the room.

When next the paper appeared, the two being at breakfast, the mother read among the latest news the following reply. "If the Marquise von O—— will come to the house of her father Herr von G—— on the third at eleven o'clock. in the morning, the gentleman she is looking for will fall at her feet."

Before she had read half of this strange announcement, she was so overcome that she handed him the paper. He read the notice three times, as if he did not trust his eyes.—"Now tell me, Lorenzo, for heaven's sake, what you think of this?"—"Monstrous!" replied the Governor and left his chair. "The artful hypocrite! Her impudence and artfulness are not to be matched. What a face! What eyes! An angel's do not look more faithful." And he went on complaining and would not be consoled.—"If it is artful-

ness," asked the mother, "what is she aiming at?"—"At nothing but deceiving us through thick and thin," replied the father. "She has already learned off by heart the story she will tell us at eleven o'clock on the third. My darling daughter, I had never believed this of you, nor imagined it possible. Forgive me, receive my blessing, all is made up. But beware the shot reserved for the fellow who will cross this threshold on the morning of the third! It would perhaps be better for me to order the servants to show him the door." Frau von G—— asserted, after perusing the notice once more, that if she was to express an opinion, she would rather believe in a strange stroke of Fate than in the baseness of her otherwise angelic daughter. But before she had concluded, the Governor cried out: "Do me the favour not to add a word. I hate to hear you speak of her!" and he left the room

A few days later the Governor received from his daughter a letter concerning her notice in the paper, in which she besought him in a respectful and touching tone—as she was forbidden to enter the house—to have the goodness to send to her at B—— the man who would appear on the morning of the third. His wife happened to be present when he received this letter, and noticing how irresolute he was, not knowing what to reply to a daughter who might be trying to deceive him and who did not ask him for forgiveness, she had the courage to disclose to him a plan she had for some time revolved in her perplexed mind. While the Governor gazed at the paper in an impassive manner, she said: "I have an idea: will you allow me to go to B—— for a day or two? If it is true that our daughter already knows the man who has replied to her anonymously through the paper, I shall succeed, even if she is the most hypocritical of traitors, in forcing her to betray her inmost secret."—"You know that I will have nothing to do with her: I forbid any intercourse between you!" replied the Governor, and in a fit of anger he tore up the letter. Putting

the bits in a sealed envelope, he wrote the address and told the messenger that it was the answer. His wife, exasperated by his incredible obstinacy which made it impossible to clear up the mystery, determined to carry out her plan in spite of him. On the following morning she chose one of his huntsmen and drove to B—— while her husband was still in bed. On arriving at the gate of the country seat, she was told by the porter that no one was admitted to the presence of the Marquise. She replied that she knew the order, but that he was to go and announce Frau von G——. The porter declared that it would be of no use, as the Marquise would not receive anybody. "But I am her mother," she persisted; "do not keep me waiting, but go and perform your duty." Hardly had the man entered the house on what seemed to him a fool's errand, when the Marquise came forth, rushed to the gate and threw herself on her knees before her mother's coach. Frau von G—— got out with her servant's help, and with great emotion raised her daughter from the ground The latter, quite overcome, pressing her mother's hand, with tears streaming down her face, led her parent respectfully to her room. "Dearest mother!" she exclaimed, after seating her on a couch before which she remained standing, drying her tears, "to what happy circumstance do I owe this most precious visit?"—"I have come," said her mother, tenderly embracing her, "only to beg of you to forgive the harshness with which you were driven from your father's house."—"Forgive?" interrupted the Marquise, and she tried to kiss her mother's hands in spite of her resistance. "As your late notice in the paper has convinced both your father and me of your innocence, I must tell you that to our great joy and surprise he came to the house yesterday."—"Who came?" exclaimed the Marquise, sitting down by her mother. "Who presented himself?" she asked anxiously.—"The very man who had replied to your notice."—"Then tell me who it is," said the Marquise with the utmost eager-

ness.—" I would rather have you guess," replied Frau von G——. " Can you imagine that yesterday, while we were at breakfast reading this dumbfounding reply, an intimate acquaintance of yours rushed into the room showing every sign of despair, and fell at your father's feet, and a moment after at mine. Not understanding what all this meant, we desired him to speak.—' My conscience,' said he, ' leaves me no rest. I am the wretch who deceived the Marquise. I must know what you think of my crime, and as it calls for vengeance, I offer myself for punishment.' "—" Who was it? Who? " cried the Marquise.—" A young, seemingly well-bred man whom we could never have suspected of such treachery," replied the mother. " You will not be surprised to hear that he is of humble origin and lacks everything that would be required in one pretending to your hand."—" And yet, dearest mother, he cannot be so bad, as he lately threw himself at your feet. But who? Who? only tell me who."—" Well then, it is Leopardo, the Tyrolese huntsman, engaged not long ago by your father, my servant whom you may have recognised just now. I have brought him to be your bridegroom."—" The huntsman Leopardo! " cried the Marquise, pressing her hand to her forehead in despair.—" Why this terror? " said Frau von G——. " Have you any reason to doubt my words? "—" How? Where? When? " cried the distracted Marquise.—" You are the only person he will confide in. He says that shame and love make it impossible for him to answer these questions to anyone else. But if you consent, we will open the door of the anteroom, where he is waiting for admittance with beating heart. I will go away and leave you to get his secret out of him."—" Oh, my God! " exclaimed the Marquise, " the noon-day heat had sent me to sleep and when I awoke I saw him walking away from the divan! " And saying this she covered her glowing face with her hands. Her mother fell on her knees before her. " Oh, my daughter," she exclaimed, " my angel! " and she

threw her arms round her. "Miserable creature that I am!" she went on, hiding her face in her daughter's lap.—"What does this mean, mother?"—"Believe, if you can, purest of angels, that there is not a word of truth in what I have said. My corrupt soul could not believe in the innocence which is your glory. To be convinced I had recourse to this stratagem."—"Dearest mother!" cried the Marquise, bending down to lift the elder up.—"I shall remain at your feet, most excellent of creatures, until you have forgiven my abominable conduct towards you."—"I pardon you, my mother! I adjure you to get up."—"I must first know if you can love and respect me just as you used to."—"My adorable mother!" replied the Marquise, and she also went down on her knees, "my heart has always been full of veneration and love for you Who else but you could have trusted me under such bewildering circumstances? How glad I am that you believe me blameless!"—"Well then," said Frau von G——, "I shall treat you as a good mother, my dearest child You shall come to my house for your confinement. If you were a princess ready to make me grandmother of a little prince, I would not take care of you with greater tenderness and respect. Never again shall we be separated. I defy the world; your shame shall be my glory if only you will forget the cruelty with which I cast you away." The Marquise did her best to console her with caresses and supplications, but not before midnight struck had she succeeded.

The next day when the excitement of the old lady, who had passed a feverish night, had somewhat subsided, the mother, daughter and grandchildren drove back to M—— as in triumph. They were in high spirits during the journey, joking about Leopardo the huntsman, who was on the box. The mother said to the Marquise: "How you blush whenever you look at his broad back!"—"Who can tell who will turn up at eleven o'clock on the third?" rejoined the Marquise, half sighing, half smiling. The nearer they drew

to M—— the more serious they became, anticipating the decisive scenes they were about to witness. As soon as they alighted, the mother, concealing her plans, led the Marquise to the rooms she had formerly occupied and told her to make herself at home; she slipped out, adding that she would return immediately. An hour later she reappeared, highly excited although secretly pleased, and exclaimed: "He would not believe me! It took me a whole hour to convince this doubting Thomas, and now he sits and sheds tears."—"Who?" asked the daughter.—"Who could it be but he who has most cause to lament?"—"Not my father?"—"He cried like a child, and I would have burst out laughing as soon as I had left the room, had I not been obliged to wipe my own tears."—"And all on account of me!" exclaimed the Marquise, getting up, "and I remain here."—"You are not to move one step," said Frau von G——. "Why did he dictate me that letter? He must come to you if he ever wants to see me again."—"Dearest mother . . ." implored the Marquise.—"I shall be inexorable," interrupted Frau von G——. "Why did he seize that pistol?"—"But I insist on . . ."—"You shall not go!" and she forced her daughter to sit down.—"If he does not come before this evening, I shall go away with you to-morrow morning." The Marquise said this would be as unjust as cruel. "Calm yourself," replied the mother, hearing that somebody was approaching, "he is already here!"—"Where?" asked the Marquise, listening. "He must be waiting outside, my father!"—"Naturally!" said Frau von G——. "He wants us to open the door."—"Let me go!" cried the Marquise, as she jumped up from her seat.—"No, Julietta, remain if you wish to please me." Thereupon the father entered, holding his handkerchief to his face. The mother stood as if to protect her daughter, turning her back to him. "Dearest father," cried the Marquise, holding out her arms to him.—"Not a step further," commanded Frau von G——. "You hear?"

The Governor stood there in tears. "He must make you an apology," she continued. "Why is he so violent? Why so obstinate? I love him, but I love you also; I respect him, but so do I you. If I have to choose, you are better than he, and by you I remain." The Governor bent himself down to the ground and sobbed aloud. "Oh, my God!" exclaimed the Marquise, obeying her mother's command, and her own tears began to flow. "He cannot even speak," said Frau von G——, stepping a little out of the way. Whereupon the daughter got up, embraced her father and told him to be calm. She begged of him, bathed in tears, kindly to sit down; she brought him a chair. He made no reply, and remained where he stood; he refused to sit down and went on crying, with his head bent low. "His health is in danger!" said the Marquise, half turned towards her mother, holding up her father. Frau von G——, seeing how convulsed he was, seemed to waver in her firmness. But as the Governor, yielding at last to the entreaties of his daughter, sank down on a seat, and she knelt at his feet coaxing and caressing him, the mother declared that it served him right and that he would now come to his senses; and walking out, she left them alone

She soon dried her tears, and fearing that the violent emotion she had been the cause of might have dangerous consequences, she thought of having a doctor called. She went to the kitchen and prepared for his evening meal everything she could think of to strengthen and refresh him, got ready and warmed the bed she would put him into as soon as he appeared. But as he did not come, and the table was laid, she went stealthily to her daughter's door to overhear their conversation. While she listened with her ear against the door, she heard her daughter whispering gently, and peering through the key-hole, she saw her sitting on her father's knees, a thing he had never before permitted. So she opened the door and beheld, with heartfelt joy, her child lying in her father's arms, her head thrown back and

her eyes closed, while he, sitting in an armchair, as if he were a lover, pressed on her mouth long, warm and thirsty kisses, his eyes glistening with tears! Neither his daughter nor he uttered a word; he sat looking into her face, as if she had been the first girl he had ever loved, and kissed her again and again. The mother's bliss was unbounded. As she stood unseen behind his chair she leisurely enjoyed the pleasure of witnessing this happy reconciliation, and refrained from interfering. At last she drew near and, bending over one side of the armchair, she again saw her husband tenderly kissing his child. On perceiving her he looked down with a frown and was going to say something; but she cried: "Fie! What a face!" and gave him a hearty kiss. Her joke put an end to this touching scene. Having told them that supper was ready, she led them to table like a betrothed couple. The Governor was gay enough, and yet he sighed from time to time, ate little, looked at his plate and played with his daughter's hand.

Next day the question arose: Who on earth will turn up to-morrow at eleven? It was the dreaded third day. Father, mother and brother—for he too had become reconciled with his sister—were all of opinion that if the man was of tolerable condition the marriage should be celebrated. They would do everything in their power to ensure the Marquise's happiness. But if the man were so circumstanced that even if they gave him a helping hand his position remained too unequal, they would oppose the marriage. They determined that the Marquise would reside with them and that they would adopt the child. The Marquise on her part seemed decided to keep her promise in any case, provided he was not a scoundrel, and to give her child a father at any cost. The mother asked them in the evening how the stranger was to be received. The father thought that the Marquise should be alone at eleven o'clock; but she asked that her parents and brother should be present, as she had no secret to hide, and in their reply they had

proposed the Governor's house as the place of meeting. She had to confess she had been very pleased with this reply. Frau von G—— remarked that both father and son would be playing unseemly parts, and advised her to yield on this point; but to please her she herself would be present. After a moment's reflection the Marquise agreed to this.

The morning of the dreaded third came, after a night of tensest anxiety. As the clock struck eleven the two ladies were sitting in the drawing-room dressed as if for a ceremony of espousals. One might have heard their hearts beat had it not been for the bustle that prevailed in the house. The eleventh stroke of the clock still hummed when Leopardo the huntsman from Tyrol entered. At his sight their faces became pale. He announced that Count F——'s carriage was at the door and that he asked to be received. "Count F——!" they both exclaimed, suddenly thrown from one excitement into another. "Lock the doors," cried the Marquise, "I am not at home for him," and she tried to push out the huntsman who was in her way, when the Count entered in the same uniform, with the same decorations and sword he had used at the storming of the citadel. The distracted Marquise thought she would sink into the ground. She took up a handkerchief she had left on a chair and was about to take refuge in a neighbouring room, when her mother seized her hand, calling out. "Julietta!" but could not utter another word from emotion. She fixed her eyes on the Count and repeated: "Julietta! I beg you to come back! Whom else could we expect?"—"Not this man, surely," cried the Marquise, returning suddenly and looking at him furiously while her face became ashen. The Count went down on his knee, holding his right hand to his heart. He bent his head and looked straight before him with flaming eyes, without uttering a word. "Whom else could we expect, fools that we are?" The Marquise stood staring at him and said: "I shall go out of my mind, mother!"—"You silly!" retorted the mother, drawing her

close to her and whispering something in her ear. The Marquise let herself fall on a sofa, her face buried in her hands. "Unfortunate creature," cried the mother, "what is the matter with you? What has happened that you were not prepared for?" The Count did not stir from the mother's side. Still kneeling he took up the hem of her gown and kissed it "Dear madam, worthy of all respect," he said in a low tone, as a tear rolled down his cheek.— "Get up, Count," she commanded, "get up! If you can console her we shall all be reconciled, all will be forgiven and forgotten." The Count rose in tears, and knelt down again before the Marquise; he took her hand gently as if it were of pure gold he feared to tarnish by his touch. But she, standing up, cried: "Go, go, go! I was prepared to see some scoundrel but not the . . . Devil." Rushing past him as if he were infected with the plague, she opened the door and called out. "Send for the Governor!"— "Julietta!" cried her astounded mother. The Marquise looked around wildly, now at the Count, now at her mother. Her heart beat, her face glowed, her eyes flamed like those of a Fury. The Governor and his son arrived. "Father," she said as they entered, "I can never marry this man," and seizing a holy water stoup that hung near the door, she threw its contents over her father, mother and brother, and rushed out.

The Governor, puzzled by this unusual scene, inquired what had happened, and turned pale on seeing Count F—— in the room at this decisive moment. The mother took hold of the Count's hand, saying: "Ask no more questions· this young man sincerely repents the past; give him, give him your blessing, and all may still end happily." The Count was thunderstruck; his eyelids trembled, his lips were deadly white. The Governor laid his hand upon his head, crying: "May you be preserved from God's curse! When do you intend to marry?"—"To-morrow," the mother replied for him, as he was unable to speak; "to-

morrow or to-day if you prefer; the Count who has shown such noble eagerness to atone for his fault will prefer the earliest date."—"So I shall have the pleasure to meet you to-morrow at eleven at the church of St. Augustine," said the Governor. At these words he bowed to him, requested his wife and son to retire to the Marquise's room and left the Count standing there alone.

In vain did they try to elicit from the Marquise why she had behaved in such a strange manner. She was in the most violent fever, would not hear of marrying and asked them to go away. Questioned why she had so suddenly changed her mind and why the Count was more hateful to her than any other man, she looked vaguely at her father with her large eyes and made no reply. "Have you forgotten that you are to be a mother?" said Frau von G——. —"In that case I must think more of myself than of my child," she replied, and swore by all the angels and saints that marriage was out of the question. The father, seeing her so beside herself, told her she was bound to keep her promise, and left the room. After an interchange of letters with the Count, he gave his orders for the wedding. A marriage contract was submitted by him to the Count, by which the latter renounced all a husband's rights and accepted any duty he might be called upon to perform. The Count signed it and returned it wet with his tears. When next morning the Governor handed the contract to his daughter, he found her more composed. Sitting up in her bed she read it over several times, and declared that she would be in the church by eleven o'clock. She got up and dressed, and without uttering a syllable took her seat in the coach with all her family and drove off.

The Count was only permitted to join them at the church door. During the whole ceremony the Marquise stared at the picture above the altar; not a look did she give the man who exchanged rings with her. After the ceremony the Count offered her his arm; and when they had left

the church the Countess bowed to him. The Governor asked him if he might have the honour to pay him a visit in his daughter's apartments: the Count muttered something that nobody understood, saluted the company and disappeared. He took a house in M—— and spent several months there. He never set his foot in his father-in-law's residence, where the Countess remained. If he was invited to the christening after the birth of the Countess's little boy, he owed this favour entirely to his tender, respectful and exemplary attitude whenever he came in contact with the family. She only saw him for a moment, sitting on her bed, well wrapped up, while he stood at the door and saluted her with the greatest respect Among the presents offered by friends to the new-born babe were two papers which he threw into the cradle: one represented a gift of twenty thousand roubles for the little boy, and the other was a will by which he left his whole fortune to the Countess in case he died before her From this day they invited him oftener, in deference to Frau von G——'s wishes. He had free access to the house, and soon after he was to be seen there nearly every evening. When he felt that he was pardoned by society, he renewed his advances to the Countess; but she only gave him hesitating encouragement a year later. However, wedding festivities were celebrated the second time with more joy than on the first occasion, and at their conclusion the whole family assembled at B——.

A whole row of young Russians came into the world successively, and on one happy occasion when he asked his wife why, on that dreadful third day, when she seemed intent on anything cruel, she had run away from him as if he were a devil, she replied, throwing her arms round his neck, that she would not have considered him a devil then if she had not taken him for an angel on his first appearance.

KARL FRIEDRICH HEIRONYSMUS, BARON VON MUENCHAUSEN

(1720–1797)

"*KOENIGSMARK*," *THE ROBBER; OR, THE TERROR OF BOHEMIA*

(Related by Rudolf Erick Raspi)

On a dark and stormy evening in September, Theodore and Herman, two very intimate friends, were going to spend a few hours at an inn, on the borders of a forest in Bohemia.

The inn was situated in a small village, consisting of a few straggling houses standing among the tall trees that skirted the forest. This village was at a trifling distance from the high road; and as no other place was to be found within twelve German miles, the inn was well frequented.

The inhabitants of the village, and those within one or two miles of it, commonly met there to repose themselves after the toil of the fatiguing day. The evening passed agreeably; gaiety prevailed. Smoking, relating legendary tales, or more modern adventures, formed their chief amusement.

They had, besides, the pleasure of beholding frequently the arrival of travellers from distant parts, and hearing their adventures.

Theodore and Herman lamented, as they passed along, the fate of an Austrian officer, who had been slain ten days before, by some of the banditti that infested the forest.

"Ill-fated Adolphus!" exclaimed Herman, "thou wilt never again behold thy Adelaide! Best of women, what will thy feelings be when thou hearest the fatal tidings? The

time is elapsed; ere now he promised to be with thee. The sword of a ruffian has slain thy husband, but he died wholly thine! Thy child too is fatherless!"

"Thou art much affected," said Theodore, "at the death of a stranger."

"He was no stranger," replied Herman, "I know him well; thou hast not long resided in this village, therefore art not acquainted with his history. We have yet more than a mile to walk, and I will relate it to you, with the reason that induced him to become a soldier.

"Adolphus Rosenberg was the son of an aged pastor, residing at Konigsal, about nine miles from this place. Near that village Colonel Kaempfer had a seat, where he retired after bravely serving during forty-four years. His daughter was then seventeen years of age, tall and extremely beautiful. Her father by habit loved military men, and he made a vow to bestow his daughter on no other, at the same time he intended his son-in-law to be of equal rank with himself.

"Adolphus was three years older; he saw the lovely maid and vowed to adore her, and her only, while he had existence. He soon gained her heart. He flew to the Colonel, and, with the glowing ardour of youth, entreated him to bless their mutual passion, and give him Adelaide.

"Kaempfer answered sternly, 'Young man, you are not a soldier, my daughter cannot be thine; I trust to thy honour to behold her no more till thou canst say, "I am an officer in the Austrian army—I obtained my commission by my valour." Then Adelaide may be thine; go, and remember my words.'

"Adolphus withdrew almost distracted, but love inspired him with courage. He heard that the celebrated Monteculi was at Prague. The General granted him an audience, and heard his artless tale with sympathising pity.

"He raised the youth by the hand, 'Young man,' said he, 'you are an ensign; I shall depart to-morrow, you will

follow me; and, if I am not deceived, you will soon be promoted.'

"In every battle Adolphus distinguished himself so eminently that he commanded a company before the year had expired. Monteculi made him his aide-de-camp and he attended the General in all his excursions.

"A few months after, the General was informed that an old friend, whom he had not seen for many years, resided near the spot where the army was encamped. 'Rosenberg,' said he, 'I find that my valued friend, Lindorf, resides at Mulda; the death of my opponent, the Marshal de Juvene, gives us tranquillity. I shall set out this afternoon for Mulda, devote this night to friendship, and return to-morrow morning, you will accompany me; we shall take but one servant, we need no other escort.'

"They accordingly departed for Lindorf's habitation.

"The meeting between the General and his old friend was very affecting. 'Do you remember the last day we were together?' said Lindorf. 'Many were the heroes that fell. I lost an arm and eye, but, blessed be God, we triumphed, and I did not shed my blood in vain' Monteculi then presented his aide-de-camp, and spoke of him so warmly that Lindorf treated him as an intimate friend

"Before the General and his companion had related half what had befallen them since their separation, a courier arrived from the camp with a letter for Monteculi; the officer who commanded during his absence had received intelligence of such importance that he requested the General to return that evening. 'My friend,' said he to Lindorf, 'duty calls me away; I intended to remain longer with you, but it cannot be; adieu, we shall meet again.'

"The General and Adolphus mounted their horses and departed. A dreary common three miles in breadth lay in their way to the camp; it was dark when they crossed it; the servant knew the road, and proceeded first. On entering the high road, the servant's horse gave a start, and at the

same time the hapless rider received a wound with a cutlass, and fell bathed in blood. Monteculi and Rosenberg drew their swords, and the latter, who was foremost, plunged his weapon in the throat of a villain who had seized his horse by the bridle; the ruffian sank to rise no more. Rosenberg then turned round and beheld his protector struggling with a villain who was endeavouring to drag him off his horse. Gratitude nerved the hand of Rosenberg; the blow was terrible, and the ruffian shared the fate of his companion. The General pressed Adolphus to his heart. 'Thou hast saved my life,' said he, 'and I am not accustomed to be ungrateful.' Rosenberg was hurt at perceiving Monteculi bleeding. 'Be not uneasy,' said he, 'it is only a slight wound in the arm, yet it prevented me using my sword, and that is the reason the villain was on the point of mastering me.'

"Rosenberg bound a handkerchief over the wound, and then devoted his attention to the servant; he was desperately wounded. While they were considering how to get him conveyed to the camp, two labourers appeared. The General desired them to take charge of his servant, and carry him to their abode, where he would send for him as soon as possible. He also requested them to get the bodies of the two ruffians interred They arrived at the camp without experiencing any further adventure.

"The General's wound soon healed. As soon as he was quite well he ordered Adolphus to be sent for. 'Rosenberg,' said he, 'to you I owe my life; the only recompense I can make thee is to enable thee to pass thine happily. Thou art a Colonel, and my Sovereign approves your rapid promotion. Fly to thy Adelaide, espouse her and be happy.'

"The warrior passed his hands over his eyes, and grateful tears flowed down Rosenberg's cheeks; he in vain attempted to speak, his emotions would not allow him. He never rested till he arrived at Konigsal; he flew to Colonel Kaempfer's; he rushed in and fell at his feet, exclaiming, 'I am your son.

I claim your promise. I command a regiment. Where is my love, my Adelaide?'

"'In thy arms, dear Rosenberg,' murmured the blushing girl.

"The Colonel blessed them both. 'Rosenberg,' said he, 'I have kept my promise; I have heard of thy valour and promotion; every praise delighted me, and I exultingly said, "What a husband my Adelaide will have!" Heaven heard my prayers; thou art returned safe to us.'

"The next day Rosenberg and Adelaide were united, and perfect bliss was theirs. A year after she presented her loved lord with a little angel, the image of its fond mother.

"Who can describe their happiness? but, alas! it did not last long. Ten days ago Rosenberg received an order to join his regiment; he departed late at night. Adelaide in vain tried to persuade him to stay till the next day. 'O stay, my love,' said she, 'for an unusual weight of sadness hangs on my mind.' 'Distress me not, my Adelaide, 'tis Monteculi sends for me, but for him I had not been thy husband; can I refuse him?' 'No, my husband, gratitude forbids thee, go, my Rosenberg, and good angels guard thy precious life.' He pressed his precious babe to his heart, and taking an affectionate leave of his wife and father, hurried away.

"Adelaide's sad presentiments were verified. He fell by the hands of assassins, and was found lifeless in the neighbouring wood. He was armed, and had a faithful servant with him, but they were overpowered. The servant's life was spared; he was so desperately wounded that the ruffians concluded he was dead. He is recovering fast, but will always be a cripple."

By this time the two friends reached the inn. The night continued stormy, and they found many travellers who were unwilling to continue their journey in such horrid weather.

"Bolfield," said Herman, addressing the landlord, "you will oblige me and my friend by giving us the particulars of Rosenberg's death, as you have heard it from his servant."

"Herman," said the landlord, "since you request it, I will comply, though the subject distresses me."

"Konigsal, you know, lies about twelve miles from this place, across the forest. Rosenberg wished to cross the forest that night, not heeding the representations of his servant, but replied that 'a soldier ought never to know fear.' As they proceeded, a distant clock struck twelve. They heard the cries of murder seemingly issuing from a clump of trees at a small distance from them. 'It is the cry of a female,' said Rosenberg, seizing his pistols and galloping towards the spot. His faithful servant followed. As they approached they perceived a figure in white, gliding through the trees, and four men following her, while the forest resounded with her cries. Again the servant remonstrated; but Rosenberg spurred his courser, and continued the pursuit, in hopes to save some wretched female from assassination

"Alas! poor Rosenberg, you were flying to meet death! Two men sprang from a thicket; one seized his horse's bridle, and the other raised his arm and held a dagger to his breast. Rosenberg's pistol did not miss fire, both the ruffians fell bathed in blood; but at the same instant another dastardly villain buried his poignard in his back; he fell lifeless from his horse. The rest of the banditti wounded the servant, and left him apparently dead.

"At daybreak three woodmen passed near the spot, and beheld the two persons stripped and bleeding. They conveyed them to a cottage and tried to restore animation by every means in their power. With the servant they soon succeeded, but his master was gone for ever.

"The servant explained the fatal event, and the name and rank of Rosenberg. The news was sent to Colonel Kaempfer. He wisely resolved to conceal the truth from Adelaide, and in the course of time to impart to her forged letters from the camp, purporting the illness and death of her beloved, for which latter event he hopes gradually to prepare her; but

he is determined that she shall not know he was murdered in the forest, within six miles of his home.

"I saw the servant yesterday; he told me the Colonel will not long survive his Rosenberg, nor Adelaide her husband; and that the villain who slew Adolphus at the same time murdered his wife and child"

Bolfield ended his narrative, and the tear of agony proclaimed he was a man. Theodore was much affected. The friends were silent for some time, and the company gradually recovered their spirits. More strangers entered, and demanded if they could sleep there that night, for the increasing violence of the storm rendered it next to impossible to cross the forest.

All those who were at the inn resolved to remain there, except one; even Theodore and Herman expressed their intention of sleeping at the inn, and Bolfield having agreed to accommodate his guests, they became more tranquil. At length Bolfield returned to the traveller who had not expressed a wish to stay at his house. "You are alone, sir," said he, "are you not afraid to cross the forest, at this hour especially?"

"Afraid!" interrupted the stranger. "I have never been afraid." The manner in which he answered struck every one.

He was a strong, well-made man, but his appearance created terror and disgust; and it was some time ere the company could resume their tranquillity.

It grew late, some of the guests retired to repose; Theodore, Herman, the landlord, and three or four friends remained; the dread unknown still retained his seat.

Theodore, wishing to hear more particulars about Rosenberg, addressed himself to Bolfield. "Landlord," said he, "in giving us an account of the death of Rosenberg, you said that he had beheld a female endeavouring to escape from four ruffians; did you ever hear what became of her, or the reason——"

"In what does that concern you?" said the stranger, starting from his chair.

"I wished to know what became of her," replied Theodore, "and I did not think myself obliged to ask your leave."

The stranger endeavoured to unknot his brow; but his dark, scowling eyes betrayed the workings of his soul. At length he composed himself, and said to Theodore, "I meant not to offend you. But your mention of that circumstance reminded me of the death of one of my ancestors, which is connected with a tradition of this forest, that has something in it of the supernatural; the thought affected me and made me furious."

"I should like to hear the story," said Theodore.

"You will not like it," said the unknown. "However, I will oblige you.

"On the 29th of November, one of my ancestors was crossing the northern part of this forest; it was almost midnight. Passing under a lofty bower which was formed by the tall branches of trees, his ears were assailed by piercing screams. He galloped to the spot from whence the sound proceeded, and beheld a lovely female, writhing in agony, and uttering terrific yells. Romaldi asked her the cause of her terror, as he beheld no one near her. 'In the name of the Holy Virgin,' said she, 'destroy this terrible insect which is by my side!'

"Romaldi, half inclined to laugh, good-naturedly alighted, and approached with the intention of treading on the insect, which appeared like a large spider; but he started back in horror on perceiving the insect increase in size, and rolling two large yellow eyes, which glared dreadfully.

"The woman redoubled her cries. 'Destroy it,' she exclaimed, 'or we are both lost!'

"By this time the insect was increased to a tremendous size. Romaldi drew his falchion, and struck a violent blow; it failed of effect; the sword rebounded as if it had struck a

rock, and the knight stood petrified with terror. The spider disappeared; the lady, unable to speak, was convulsed with agony.

"Unutterable horror seized Romaldi, when he beheld a hand grasping her throat. Thunder shook the sky; the hurricane was appalling, but the storm lasted but a few moments.

"Romaldi looked fearfully round; his unhappy companion was gone. He lifted his hands to heaven. A loud laugh made him turn. At that instant something hit him in the face, and a voice, which seemed close to him (though he could see no one), said in a whisper: 'Thou shalt pay dearly for thy attempt.' Romaldi with difficulty remounted his horse, and endeavoured to reach an inn which was on the borders of the forest, but it was daylight before he succeeded, being severely bruised in the face from the blow he had received.

"As he went along he considered what could be done to avert the threat he had received. He examined his own conscience, and found it stained with many crimes, for which he feared he was now going to receive retribution. 'I will brave everything,' said he; 'it shall never be said Romaldi is a coward.'

"When he had taken some refreshment at the inn, he called the landlord. 'Muther,' said he, 'can you procure me a sword? I broke mine last night in the forest.' 'It is now two years, my lord,' answered Muther, 'since a noble knight breathed his last at my house, on his return from Palestine, and had no attendant with him; his sword hangs in my chamber; I will fetch it down.'

"Romaldi found it an excellent sword; the blade was well tempered, and the mounting magnificent. He generously requited the landlord for it, and resolved to remain at the inn two or three days, and then proceed to Vienna.

"The next evening, Count Clodimer arrived at the inn, intending to hunt in the forest early the succeeding morning.

Romaldi and Clodimer had already met at several tournaments and were delighted at the unexpected encounter.

"At five in the morning the two friends, well armed, and with a number of attendants, plunged into the thickest part of the forest. The dogs soon seized an immense bear, which Clodimer put to death with his spear. Romaldi was equally successful; and after a chase of six hours they proposed returning to the inn. At that instant a large wolf passed them. Romaldi pursued him, but Clodimer, whose horse was fatigued, called out he would wait there for his return. One of the servants called two of the finest dogs and galloped after Romaldi.

"The wolf entered a long avenue, and sat down at the foot of a tree, without showing any signs of fear. Romaldi spurred his courser When he came up the wolf disappeared, and instead of him there sat a man dressed in a peasant's habit! Romaldi was thunderstruck, the servant crossed himself, and the dogs barked violently.

"Romaldi became furious; he sprang from his steed, and wounded the unknown severely in his breast. 'Thou diest,' exclaimed he, 'unless thou revealest how thou canst transform thyself into a wolf at pleasure.' 'Mercy, noble knight,' said the man, 'and I will tell you all; but help, help, I expire!' The servant, who was athletic, took the wounded man on his shoulders, and proceeded to the place where they had left their friends, and from thence to the inn.

"Clodimer and Romaldi entered the yard, and the two servants followed, bearing the wounded man, who showed little signs of life.

"At that instant a dreadful scream was heard. Clodimer turned round; his two servants lay extended on the ground, and the unknown had disappeared. He looked towards the spot where Romaldi stood when he heard the scream, but no trace of the knight remained. Something brushed by him, and exclaimed, 'Romaldi receives the punishment due to

his crimes.' The servants were not much hurt; all they recollected was that a strong sulphurous smell suddenly arose; their sight failed, and they were flung to the ground with a violent force.

"Clodimer, affected at this awful event, departed for Spain, to seek adventures that might dispel the gloom from his mind. This is the tradition you demanded."

"I thank you," said Theodore, "but must confess I see no resemblance between the adventures. Romaldi, 'tis true, heard the shrieks of a woman in the forest; but, then, the whole story is supernatural Quite different is that of Rosenberg: there is nothing supernatural in his. Who knows if it was not a plan——"

"For what?" said the stranger, with a menacing attitude. "Your suppositions displease me"

"You seem," said the youth, "to have a desire of quarrelling with me. If so, have the goodness to inform me of it. Theodore is as little acquainted with fear as you may be."

At that time a loud whistling was heard near the house. The unknown addressed Bolfield: "Landlord, some of my attendants had lost themselves in the forest; I hear the signal agreed on that they should make to find me out; receive them into your house, that they may take some refreshment; we shall then proceed on our journey."

Bolfield hesitated—he knew not what to say; but the stranger, without awaiting an answer, walked to the door and, opening it with impatience, repeated the signal, and three men entered, wrapped in close mantles.

Theodore and Herman looked at them with distrust, and were convinced that they were men of suspicious character. The stranger ordered Bolfield to give the men some brandy, but to bring him wine.

The unknown and his associates sat down to a table in one corner of the room. They spoke low and with unfinished sentences. Theodore fancied that he heard them mention Rosenberg's name; he doubted not but they were

his murderers, and he became so agitated that every look betrayed his emotion.

The stranger perceived it, and rose from the table. He made a sign to his companions, and having paid the landlord, he glanced a look of defiance at Theodore, and departed with his three followers.

"Thank heaven he is gone!" said Bolfield. "Who can he be? At this late hour in the forest—it is strange."

"I can explain it," said Theodore. "They are assassins. He who was here so long was their chief. I am deceived if Rosenberg fell not by their swords. I marked his confusion when I renewed the subject. The tale he related I regard as a fabrication to make us think less of Rosenberg's murder. But I am fatigued; where is the chamber you design for Herman and myself?"

"Be not displeased," said Bolfield, "if I entreat you to pass the night in a place that was built last year in my garden. When the house is full I sleep there myself. You will find a comfortable bed, and I lament my inability to provide for you better, but every chamber is occupied. These gentlemen and myself will endeavour to take some rest in our chairs before the fire."

Theodore and Herman retired to their new habitation. It was built at the extremity of the garden adjoining the forest. Herman thought there might be danger in sleeping in this place, especially if there was a banditti in the forest, but his friend persuaded him to the contrary.

"No one," said he, "will suppose there are any persons in this small building, and as to the inn, they will not attack it this night, as there are so many men in it."

The two friends soon fell asleep. About an hour later Theodore was awakened by a shrill whistle at a short distance. He started from his bed and went to the window, which, being strongly barricaded, confined his view; but he bent forward and beheld three men in close conversation. A large tree intercepted part of the moon's rays, but by the

faint light that shone he recognised them to be the same as belonged to the terrific stranger.

"Where can Koenigsmark tarry?" said one of them.

"Hush!" replied a comrade, "he comes."

A tall figure made its appearance; on his head he wore a black, waving plume, yet Theodore knew him to be the mysterious unknown. The men bowed to the ground.

"Comrades," said he, "I have made you wait; I have been conferring with our lieutenant on our intended expedition We must lose no time. You, Artenberg, must take three men besides these two, and depart immediately. Conceal yourselves in the forest, as near as you can to the Colonel's house. Koeniski and I will join you before dark."

Artenberg bowed and departed with his comrades; Koenigsmark disappeared among the trees. Theodore awoke Herman, and told him what he had heard, and they agreed that most probably it was Colonel Kaempfer's house that they were going to attack.

"Doubtless, affected by the murder of his Rosenberg, the Colonel had applied to justice and determined to have the forest searched, so they would murder him also."

"Unhappy Adelaide," continued Theodore, "thou art a widow, and they wish to make thee fatherless; but I will defend thee with the last drop of my blood."

As he pronounced these words, a pale and bloody figure was seen to glide across the chamber; it stopped opposite to Theodore, waved its hand, and disappeared.

"It is the shade of Rosenberg!" said the youth; "he approves my purpose of defending his wife and child, and comes to bless me."

The two friends again retired to their couch, but rose at daybreak. They imparted in confidence to Bolfield what they had heard and seen, and then they left the inn. They also told their adventure to several friends, most of whom were desirous to accompany them, and offer their services to Colonel Kaempfer.

They made choice of six brave young men. Steinfort, Herman's brother-in-law, was one. He had been some time in the army, but love had caused him to quit it.

The eight brave associates, well armed with swords and daggers, departed for Koningsal, where they arrived about twelve in the day. Theodore desired his friends to wait at some distance, while he got introduced to the Colonel and told him the motive of their journey. The porter told Theodore that his master was ill and that he could not admit a stranger, but the youth desired him to tell the Colonel that he came on business of the utmost importance. In a few minutes Theodore was introduced to Kaempfer, who was sitting up in bed with the paleness of death imprinted on his countenance.

The servant withdrew, and Theodore related to the Colonel the events of the preceding night, and the orders he had heard Koenigsmark give his men. To remove every doubt, he called Steinfort, who had served under one of Kaempfer's friends, to prove that it was a desire to serve the Colonel that had made him travel above ten miles that morning.

"Noble youth," said Kaempfer, "what recompense can I make you?"

"We shall be amply rewarded if we can save you and your hapless daughter from ruffians."

Theodore then went out and returned with the rest of his friends, who were received in the most grateful manner. After they had refreshed themselves, a servant conducted them into the garden that surrounded the house, that they might judge where it was most likely for them to break in. They found it all so strong that, excepting on the east side, they thought it would be difficult for them to penetrate into the house. Theodore repeated his observations to the Colonel, and told him, by what they had heard from Koenigsmark, that the robbers would be but eight in number; and as the Colonel's two men-servants were in the prime of

life, there would be ten persons to receive them; there was an evident superiority.

"We must oppose them in the garden," continued the youth, "to prevent their breaking into the house and alarming Adelaide and her attendants."

"Bravely spoken," said the Colonel, "but I too must fight; grief and old age have bowed me down, but I can still wield a sword."

Theodore knelt. "By the memory of Rosenberg, I conjure you not to expose yourself; remember Adelaide; you are her only support."

Steinfort and his companions joined in their friend's request. While they were thus expostulating with the brave Kaempfer, Adelaide entered, (she had been distracted ever since the knowledge of Rosenberg's death, though of his murder she was ignorant), dressed in a loose white robe, her hair dishevelled, and her appearance denoting eternal grief. Closely pressed to her breast, she held her child, but seemed unconscious of every other object round her.

"You see, my friends," said her venerable father, "what my Adelaide has come to—even me, her poor aged parent, is forgotten."

It was now near six in the evening, the western horizon gradually sunk in gloom. Theodore assembled his little troop.

"It is probable the villains will not come till midnight. However, let us prepare in time."

They drew their swords, and swore to defend the aged Colonel and the distracted widow of Rosenberg, or perish in the attempt.

"Are we sufficiently armed?" said Herman; "they, like us, have no firearms; they would not use them for fear of alarming the adjacent village, and they expect no such resistance, supposing they have only the aged Kaempfer and two servants to conquer and them taken unawares."

They next examined their weapons, and busied themselves

with putting everything in proper order. They then sat down, and in some generous wine drank to the success of the Colonel and his children.

The great clock in the hall struck twelve. Steinfort reminded Theodore that Kaempfer had extorted a promise from him to awake him at that hour.

"No, my friend," said he, "humanity obliges me to disregard that promise; let the veteran enjoy a temporary oblivion to his woes; may he not awake till we have exterminated his enemies!"

They entered the garden, and took their proposed stations. Theodore walked to some distance, and then returned, saying that he was certain some distant voices had met his ear. Soon after Steinfort beheld a man approach; he was presently followed by others, who appeared to be examining the place with caution. Theodore and his friends from their ambush heard the villains' converse.

"It was needless," said one, "to come in such numbers on this business; it is degrading to our spirit; myself and two more would have sufficed."

"Artenberg, you are rash," said another, "the servants may be courageous men; you——"

"Silence!" said a voice, which Theodore recognised for Koenigsmark's. "One of my spies informed me that Kaempfer has many friends, and since we deprived him of his darling Rosenberg, some of them frequently sleep in his house. Woe to them if that is the case! This night they shall die, and Adelaide be mine. Accursed Rosenberg! thy life was not a sufficient forfeit for the pangs you caused me by marrying her. But Adelaide shall pay the debt; she shall be pressed to the bosom of her husband's murderer."

"Damnable villain!" exclaimed Theodore with impetuosity, "I defy thee. Dost thou recollect me? I overheard thy plans. I—— But come, dastard, and face a man."

"Kosinski," said the chief, with the utmost coolness,

" we are betrayed; follow your captain." Then, turning to Theodore, he exclaimed, " As to thee, thou shalt soon feel whether Koenigsmark is a coward."

A dire conflict began. Steinfort and Kosinski met; they appeared equal in strength and agility. Artenberg opposed Theodore at the moment when the youth's hand was lifted to strike Koenigsmark. He parried his blow, and darting his left hand forwards, buried the dagger in the villain's throat, who instantly fell to earth. Albert, one of Theodore's associates, received Koenigsmark's dagger in his breast, and he fell at Steinfort's feet.

Steinfort became furious, and closed with his opponent; they both fell; after a violent struggle, he buried his sword in Kosinski's heart. Steinfort was also wounded in the side, but he sprang up, eager to assist his friends. Heavens! what a sight met his view!—the clashing of swords had awakened Adelaide's maids, and their screams had the same effect on Kaempfer. He seized his sword and rushed into the garden; he threw himself among the combatants, exclaiming, " My child, I will avenge thee, or perish! "

" Then perish! " said Koenigsmark; " follow Rosenberg."

The wretched warrior sank beneath the blow.

Theodore, frantic at this event, rushed on Koenigsmark, and with wonderful rapidity knocked the dagger from the villain's hand. Sure of victory, he pressed on Koenigsmark, and aimed his dagger at his breast. It penetrated through the coat, but some unknown obstacle prevented it drinking his blood. Theodore doubted his senses, and retreated a few spaces, to consider his antagonist.

The chief calmly looked around him. He perceived Kosinski, Artenberg and another lying motionless; three more were badly wounded. Colonel Kaempfer's servants were unhurt, and conveyed their beloved master back to his chamber.

Theodore was rooted to the spot, supposing Koenigsmark was a magician. Steinfort had performed prodigies, but was

faint with loss of blood. Albert was mortally wounded, and Herman was the only one unhurt.

The two servants returned, saying their master was dying, and wished to see Theodore.

Koenigsmark took the advantage of the confusion; he and his comrades who were unhurt supported two of the wounded men and retreated to the forest, leaving the other to his fate.

Theodore hastened to the Colonel's chamber and tenderly inquired how he was. The Colonel had received a deep wound in his breast, and fearing it might be mortal, he wished to recommend Adelaide and her child to Theodore's protection.

"Monteculi," said he, "will be a friend to them both. My child will not live long; should her sorrows end before you see Monteculi, I conjure thee, take charge of her infant and deliver it safe to my noble friend. He will love and preserve it, for Rosenberg's sake. If any misfortune befalls Monteculi, let not Adelaide's child want a friend; remember the sacred charge."

Kaempfer had exerted himself too much, and he sank into a state of insensibility. When the surgeon arrived, he examined the wound, and declared there were hopes of his recovery if the agitation of his mind did not produce a fever.

As soon as the Colonel's wound was dressed, Herman entered, and begged the surgeon might attend Steinfort, whose wounds were very painful; he added that Albert had at that moment expired, and that the wounded ruffian whom Koenigsmark had left was in his last moments, and desired to see Theodore.

The surgeon dressed Steinfort's wounds with care, and declared them not dangerous, though painful; he then attended to the rest of the wounded friends.

In the meantime Theodore attended the dying ruffian.

"I am punished justly," said he. "Heaven forgive my crimes. It was I who stabbed Rosenberg, by my chief's orders. Be on your guard, Koenigsmark is invincible."

The man was going to acquaint him with the place of that assassin's retreat, but death frustrated his intention.

Theodore returned to the Colonel's apartment, much agitated with what the ruffian had said concerning Koenigsmark's being invincible, for he trusted to avenge himself on that assassin.

The sun illumined the cloudless horizon, and Theodore, with Herman, retired, greatly fatigued, to a chamber, intending to rest the whole of the day The Colonel sent one of his servants to the Chief of the Police, to acquaint him with the events that had happened the previous night.

At noon the servant returned, accompanied by the Chief of the Police and five hussars. The Chief took down an account of the whole affair, saying he should write to the Court of Vienna, and did not doubt but the Minister would offer a large reward for Koenigsmark's apprehension. He then caused the hussars to bury the bodies of the ruffians in the forest, and having ordered intelligence to be sent to him of any fresh attack, returned to Konigsal.

Adelaide's intellect remained in the same dreadful state; but the Colonel, by the evening, was much better. Theodore and Herman visited him as soon as they were risen.

"You have saved my life," said Kaempfer, "and the honour of my child; who, notwithstanding her melancholy state, would have been the victim to Koenigsmark's depravity."

"Colonel," said Theodore, "I shall not be satisfied till I have ended the existence of that assassin. All I ask is that my wounded friends may remain here till they are recovered."

"While I live," said Kaempfer, "they may consider this house as their own, and I long to embrace the brave Steinfort; tell him to come to my chamber as soon as he can walk."

The next day Albert's funeral took place, and by the Colonel's order was conducted with magnificence. He also

settled a considerable annuity on the widowed mother of the unfortunate youth.

Theodore would fain have set out in search of Koenigsmark; but Steinfort, who recovered rapidly, so earnestly pressed him to stay till he was able to accompany him, that he delayed his departure from time to time.

After a fortnight passed at Colonel Kaempfer's, Steinfort, Herman, and Theodore prepared for their enterprise; the rest of their friends were yet confined with their wounds. They agreed that each of them should take two daggers and a sword. While they were busied settling their plan, they were interrupted by the entrance of a servant, with a note for Theodore, and a packet for Steinfort. Theodore opened his letter, and read the following words:

"I have this moment received a letter from Marshal Daun, with whom I formerly served; he promises to recommend you to Monteculi, and agrees with me that he has only to relate your heroic actions to effect that purpose.

"The father of Adelaide glories in the thought that through his means you will become one of the brightest ornaments of the Austrian army. Once more accept my thanks.

"KAEMPFER."

Steinfort's ran thus:—

"Writing to Colonel Ingelheim, with whom you told me you had formerly served, he has given me such an account of your behaviour that I had no difficulty in procuring you the enclosed—a commission as lieutenant of cavalry in Ingelheim's regiment. Theodore will receive his commission from the hands of Marshal Daun in a day or two.

"Tell Herman I have produced him a situation that will enable him to pass his days in peace and competency; as I know he is not so partial to the army as his two friends.

The rest of the brave men who accompanied you shall not be forgotten.

"May you be happy, is the prayer of

"KAEMPFER."

The friends acknowledged that the Colonel merited their eternal gratitude. In the morning they heard with sorrow that he had had a bad night.

"Let us hasten," said the afflicted Theodore, "to the destruction of Koenigsmark. Kaempfer draws near his end, let him have the satisfaction of knowing that the villain is no more, ere he expires."

The friends agreed to meet in the garden exactly at midnight, and leave a note for the Colonel, whom they did not think fit to acquaint with their design, previous to their departure.

At seven in the evening a violent storm arose: the wind howled and the rain fell in torrents.

"Power Omnipotent!" exclaimed Theodore, "suffer the storm to abate; let me meet Koenigsmark, and avenge Rosenberg."

At that instant an ancient elm was torn from its roots, and was thrown with a horrid crash against the windows of the apartment where the youth was sitting. One of the casements was forced in, and he had just time to escape impending death. The servants rushed in, and were happy to find he had received no injury. He eagerly inquired after the Colonel and his daughter, and was answered that Adelaide seemed unconscious of the fury of the elements, and sat nursing her child, the only being that now experienced the least attention from her; nor would she part with it a moment. The Colonel suffered excruciating pain.

The servants then departed, and left Theodore to his reflections. After a time he threw himself on the bed, and gradually sank into slumber. When he awoke, the storm had subsided, the moon shone, and the sky wore a pleasing

calm. He sprang from the bed, and taking his weapons hastened to the place of rendezvous; his friends were there.

"We are but just come," said they, "thou hast not made us wait."

"We shall not walk far into the forest," said Herman, "without meeting with some of the banditti."

"Grant Heaven," replied Theodore, "that their leader may be one."

They leaped the garden pales, and proceeded across the forest, till they came to an avenue of lofty trees. Steinfort drew his sword.

"Be on your guard—I thought I heard some noise."

A pale light appeared amidst a clump of trees at a short distance; they fearlessly proceeded to the spot, but no human being appeared. Still a blue flame played amid the trees. Slowly a figure, transparent as air, arose; a white mantle wrapped its form; in its hand it held a dagger, dripping with blood; and fixing its hollow eyes on Theodore, appeared agonised. Speech seemed denied it. It waved its hand towards Kaempfer's house, and was then lost in the air. The friends were transfixed with amazement: Theodore was the first who recovered his speech.

"Sacred shade! what means," said he, "can I pursue to give thee peace?"

Steinfort observed that it had pointed to Kaempfer's house.

"It is the shade of Rosenberg," said Theodore; "our cause is just; come on, my friends, our cause is just, we shall conquer."

At no great distance from the place where the spirit of Rosenberg vanished they heard a terrific shriek. Their daggers were instantly unsheathed. A tall figure in white glided through the trees; with almost incredible swiftness four men of gigantic stature pursued her.

"This is a signal for attack," said Theodore; "they take us for benighted travellers, and the whole is a deception."

Presently three men, finding the bait did not succeed,

advanced and bid them stop. Theodore instantly saw that Koenigsmark was not one of them.

"Thou shalt pay for my disappointment," said he to the villain who opposed him.

The man fought bravely, but the youth presently slew him Steinfort was equally successful.

Herman also killed his antagonist, but received two deep wounds with a dagger.

"My dear friend," said Steinfort, "I lament thy misfortune. Theodore and myself have escaped unhurt; hadst thou been equally successful, we might——" He started. "We will die nobly," said he. "Here are more ruffians."

Four men appeared; a warlike gait and commanding air proclaimed one of them to be Koenigsmark.

"It is Rosenberg's murderer," said Theodore, and aimed a blow at the captain, which he parried with his sword.

With undaunted valour the combat was continued on both sides. Steinfort fought bravely, but Herman, being wounded, could render little assistance Theodore once more seemed to gain an advantage over his formidable adversary. He aimed at his heart; the blow was violent, but the dagger broke in his hand, and Koenigsmark was unhurt.

"Though all hell assist thee, I will not desist," said Theodore, grasping his other dagger.

"Seize this madman," said the captain to his men.

They approached, and after a violent struggle disarmed Theodore.

Koenigsmark addressed Steinfort. "I give thee thy life," he exclaimed, "for thou art brave. Go, and take care of thy wounded companion; but tell Adelaide her new favourite dies ere to-morrow's sun." Koenigsmark ordered Theodore to be conveyed to his (the chief's) abode.

The villains who had fought with Steinfort and Herman were dead, but Theodore's opponent still lived. He had

succeeded Kosinski as lieutenant of the band, and was beloved by Koenigsmark, who ordered the greatest care to be taken of him.

Steinfort and his friend, whom he carefully led, were almost distracted at the thought of returning to Colonel Kaempfer with such dire intelligence.

"Wretch!" said the former, "he ordered me to tell Adelaide. Alas! he knows not that she cannot attend to the dismal tale."

After they had walked a considerable time, Koenigsmark entered the thickest part of the forest. One of the men removed the withered trunk of a tree, and showed the opening of a cave; a trap-door was removed. Theodore, whose hands and feet were tied, was carried between two men, and he soon found himself in a spacious cave, illumined by three lamps. Several robbers welcomed their chief.

"I have met with an adventure," said he; "two of our men are slain, and the lieutenant is badly wounded, our surgeon must dress his wounds. Give him some wine, and when we are refreshed, this madman shall be put to the torture."

Theodore betrayed no symptom of fear. The surgeon dressed the lieutenant's wounds, and declared he was in no danger. A noise was heard above, and presently two men entered with a female, the picture of misery; the tears trickled down her wan cheeks, and she heaved the most piercing sighs.

"Go to your cell," said one of his conductors, pushing her barbarously; "mind and obey me better another time, or I will cut you to pieces."

The wretched woman withdrew.

Theodore's heart was oppressed; this hapless female made him think of Adelaide. "Perhaps," said he mentally, "she now wants my assistance—perhaps Kaempfer is now dying, and I am detained here by a villain, and doomed to die by torture."

At this instant the shade of Rosenberg glided by him; a blue flame played round its head. The dogs howled dreadfully, but the robbers did not appear to see anything.

"It is come to comfort me," said Theodore, "or perhaps it was sent by heaven to admonish me not to arraign its decrees: I bow with respect."

Koenigsmark started from his seat. "How is the lieutenant?" asked he, with a loud voice. One of the men replied that it was not mortal, and that he was laid in bed. He then addressed Theodore: "In ten minutes thou shalt be on the rack."

"Whenever I have met thee," said Theodore, "I have shown some courage; my spirit shall not fail me now; murderer, I defy thee."

The chief became furious, he ordered some of his men to seize Theodore and inflict the torture on him. They stripped him, and then extended their victim on an iron cross. The youth surveyed the apparatus with undaunted fortitude.

"Prepare," said Koenigsmark, "the redhot pincers; extract his nails one by one, and pour molten lead in the wounds: let him languish thus for an hour, and then come to me for further orders."

A confused murmur was heard. The lieutenant rushed in pale and bloody, he knelt to Koenigsmark. "Captain," said he, "do you remember the battle of Pandrues, and that I there saved your life when you were felled to the ground?"

"I remember it," said Koenigsmark; "I told you then I would recompense you, nor have I a wish to forfeit my word."

"I may not live long," replied Fredrich, "and I ask my reward."

"I grant it," said the captain, "be it what it may."

"Then I recommend you to unbind that warrior," and he, turning to the men who were to torture Theodore, said,

"His life is granted me for saving our leader from the sword of a pandour."

The men hesitated, and looked at their captain, who addressed Fredrich. "I am astonished," said he, "that you should wish that presumptuous youth, who has inflicted that deadly wound in your breast, to live."

"That is the very reason—his sword brought me to the ground, and he might have slain me; he disdained to strike a prostrate foe, and I wish to repay the obligation."

"Obey your lieutenant's orders," said Koenigsmark to the men. Theodore was instantly unbound. "His life is granted, but he shall ever remain a prisoner in this cave; he loves Adelaide, and his liberty may disturb my plans."

The youth took Fredrich's hand. "My gratitude to you shall ever remain in my heart; you have nobly saved me from the torture."

"I have done my duty," said Fredrich, and retired to have his wound dressed again, for in his haste to save Theodore he had loosened his bandages.

Koenigsmark withdrew, frowningly, and the robbers followed, except one, who remained with Theodore.

"If you are fatigued," said he, "you may lie down on that bed," showing him one that stood in a kind of recess.

Theodore, much fatigued, threw himself on it, and notwithstanding the agony of his mind, fell asleep. He was awakened by a great noise, and starting from his melancholy bed, he beheld the captain and twenty of his comrades sitting round a table drinking. Koenigsmark perceived him and bade him approach; Theodore slowly advanced.

"Though I have doomed thee to be a prisoner, I intend you shall live well; at Fredrich's desire, you are not to be treated like a servant; therefore you will have nothing to do but to amuse yourself as you can."

"You have no right to detain me here; give me liberty."

"It is useless to ask it," said Koenigsmark. "Show him to his apartment."

It was a cell hung round with black. On a table lay some books. The men gave Theodore a lamp, and withdrew. The youth lay down on the bed, and again relapsed into melancholy reflections. Eternal captivity seemed dreadful to his active mind, and he began to entertain thoughts of that most horrid crime—self-murder! Rosenberg's shade again appeared, and with his hand pointed to a corner of the room. The youth's eyes followed the direction—a bloody scroll appeared on the hangings: "Live, Adelaide's child has need of thee." A rumbling noise succeeded, and in a few moments all supernatural appearances vanished. A ray of hope illumined his mind. "I am not doomed," thought he, "to pass my life in this cave."

A man entered with wine and provisions, saying, "My captain ordered me to bring you this, and I obeyed with pleasure, for I pity you."

"I thank you kindly," said Theodore. "Tell me, may I sleep here in safety?"

"You may; your life is safe, since Koenigsmark has granted it."

He withdrew, and the youth, having satisfied his hunger and thirst, retired to his couch and enjoyed a profound repose. He awoke some hours after. He was in complete darkness. He was at first agitated, but soon fell into another slumber, from which he was suddenly awakened by some one shaking him by the shoulder. He started up, extended his arms, and seized a man by the throat, but loosened his hold on hearing these words: "I am thy friend, do not hurt me; I am Fredrich."

"My noble prisoner," said Theodore.

"Listen to me," interrupted the youth. "The captain and his comrades, except two, are roving about the forest. I came to tell thee that to-morrow night they are going on a dangerous expedition. If they succeed—as I think they will—they do not return till the next night, as they go disguised as merchants, to dispose of their booty at the next

nearest town. I then mean to save thee myself. I joined the band in a state of desperation; I have long repented it, but have had no opportunity of returning to the paths of virtue. The man who brought your supper will remain, but I have reason to suppose he will assist us. I will bring thee a sword and a dagger. I must now quit thee for fear I should be seen coming from the apartment, a circumstance that might awake suspicion." He pressed Theodore's hand and retired. He had not been long gone when Koenigsmark and the gang returned. They appeared very gay, and made the cave resound with bursts of laughter.

In the morning his attendant brought him a good breakfast. Theodore wished to avoid the sight of Koenigsmark, who was hateful to him; he pleaded a headache, and resolved to remain in his cell the whole day.

Evening at length arrived. Theodore's attendant told him that the banditti were gone out earlier than usual, as they had to journey above twenty miles from their cave, to a place where there had been a fair, and they meant to attack the merchants as they returned loaded with money or the commodities for which they had changed away their goods.

Theodore retired to bed, so the man might not suspect any adventure to be on foot. Fredrich was punctual. Theodore dressed himself, and girt on the weapons his friend had brought him

"Now, Theodore," said his friend, "we must wake the man; he must join with us, or we shall be obliged to take his life."

"Would it not be better," replied the youth, "to quit the cave without waking him?"

"You are in error," said Fredrich. "When Koenigsmark returns he will torture him for falling asleep and suffering us to escape; we at least, if obliged to take his life, shall do it in our own defence, and with as little cruelty as possible."

"Stop," said Theodore. "Could we not take that hapless female with us?"

"She is not here," said Fredrich; "she is obliged to be out in the forest every night with the four men, whose province it is to lure the traveller to their toils." Fredrich then waked the man. "Joseph," said he, "this young warrior and myself are going to leave this hellish cave for ever—you must go with us or die."

"Oh! I will follow you anywhere," replied Joseph. "I shall be glad to see the sun again."

"Take a dagger then," said the lieutenant, "and let us depart."

In a few minutes they were out of the cavern.

"My friend," said Theodore, "let us direct our course to Colonel Kaempfer."

"Kaempfer's!" said Fredrich, "that is the house which Koenigsmark attacked. I was not in that business."

"Yes," replied Theodore, "it was I who fought against him, but my dagger would not enter his breast, though it was well aimed."

Frederich pressed his hand with agitation "I know not the reason, but I have heard Koenigsmark say that no dagger could wound him there. It made me shudder when I reflected on it: I have sometimes thought that he wore secret armour which blunted every weapon."

"But my weapon was not blunted," said Theodore.

"Can any other conjecture, then, be true," said Fredrich, "than that he is under the protection of some fiend?"

Fredrich was weak from his wound; Joseph and Theodore in turns supported him, and they arrived safe at Colonel Kaempfer's just at break of day. The servant was overjoyed at beholding Theodore, who inquired how Adelaide was.

"Much weaker, but her senses are not returned; yet she still retains her infant with her."

He asked for Steinfort and Herman.

"They are in the same apartments," said the man, "as

they always occupied. The latter is very ill with his wounds, which are much inflamed with the grief your absence caused."

Theodore hastened to their chambers; his presence diffused great joy. Fredrich was introduced to them.

"Receive," said the youth, "a penitent to your friendship; my crimes make me ashamed to appear before you."

They kindly encouraged him, declaring that his generous act in regard to Theodore cancelled his errors and entitled him to esteem.

"Dear Theodore," said the youth, "before I tell you the name of my father, and get you to intercede for me, I must achieve some deed that may entitle me to it. When I can say, 'Father, I have restored tranquillity to Bohemia: Koenigsmark is no more,' I shall hope that pardon will not be denied me."

Theodore was informed that Colonel Kaempfer had been acquainted with his return, and wished to see him. He repaired to his apartment.

"Welcome, brave Theodore," said the Colonel. "Thank Heaven you have not lost your life in my cause." His emotions overcame him, and he fainted.

"This is what I expected," said the surgeon; "I must entreat you to retire."

Theodore and Fredrich thus repaired to the village and imparted all they knew to the Chief of the Police.

"Sir," said Fredrich, "the gang consists of fifty-four men, well armed and courageous."

The Chief proposed that Koenigsmark and his followers should be attacked that very evening, on their return from the expedition of plundering the merchants. Fredrich remarked that, as the enterprise was dangerous, they had taken fire-arms.

"If we succeed," said the officer, "the Emperor will, I am certain, reward you nobly."

Fredrich bowed. "My friend and myself are returning to

Konigsal—we will be ready to attend you at the appointed time."

"I cannot let you go," said the officer; "the intelligence you have communicated is of that consequence that I am obliged by my office to detain you till we proceed to Koenigsmark's cave and verify your deposition; but you will be treated in my family as friends"

Theodore said that "a message must be sent then to Colonel Kaempfer's to acquaint him with that circumstance, and tell Lieutenant Steinfort what time we set off, as he will accompany us."

At nine in the evening, Steinfort arrived; he said that Kaempfer was much worse, and Adelaide very ill; at which information Theodore was much affected.

When they were ready to set out, the officer told them he had not been able to collect more than seventy of his men, Theodore assured them that horses would be no use to them, as the cave was so situated that no cavalry could approach it.

The officer gave the word and they departed. After marching three miles, Fredrich said, "Order your troops to strike into the path on the right; that will take them into the thickest part of the forest"

The officer obeyed. Fredrich took the hands of his two friends.

"Theodore," said he, "I saved your life; if I fall, I conjure you take this ring to Dresden, inquire for Baron Adelstan; he is my father, tell him I died penitent"

"Grant Heaven you may survive," said Steinfort; "if not I will also go and bear testimony of thy virtues"

The officer approached impatiently. "We have travelled a long five miles, and yet see no vestige of the cave"

"Order some of your men to follow me," said Fredrich. He entered a long narrow avenue, and ascended an eminence. On the descent of the other side stood the withered trunk that concealed the trap-door. Theodore examined it and found it in the same state as they had left it.

"It is useless," said Fredrich; "be assured there is none of the gang returned—they are too careful to leave the door open. Order your men to conceal themselves round the eminence; my friends and I will keep watch."

About ten minutes after a shrill whistle was heard.

"It is the signal," said Fredrich; "we must go and meet them, we shall have more advantage on level ground than on this eminence."

The officer divided the men into four divisions; one of them he commanded himself, the others were adjudged to Theodore, Steinfort and Fredrich. Three of the divisions filed off between the trees. The officer and twelve men advanced towards the spot from whence they had heard the whistle.

When they were met by Koenigsmark, he said to his men contemptuously, "See you that little army, yet not one fourth of our number, and they mean to attack us." He advanced about twenty paces, and then ordered his men, who were in front to fire.

Two of the hussars fell, the rest fired when they were close to Koenigsmark, and many of the ruffians were killed and wounded The whole of the banditti now rushed furiously forward, but the two divisions, headed by the three friends, closed in their rear.

"We are surrounded," said Koenigsmark; "let us not be taken alive, every man to his duty." He perceived Theodore bravely fighting in the midst of the banditti. "Perdition overtake thee," he cried. "How hast thou escaped?"

"By my assistance," said Fredrich, advancing and firing a pistol. It escaped the captain, and shot one of the ruffians.

"Damnable traitor!" said Koenigsmark, "thus I punish thee," and shot him in the breast as he was rushing on him with a drawn sword. He fell at Theodore's feet; he tried to press his hand—uttered a few words about his father and expired.

The conflict had withdrawn some paces distant. Theodore rushed on towards them. "Where is Koenigsmark?" said he madly. "I must find him."

"I fear," said Steinfort, "he has escaped. I have received a pistol shot in the shoulder. Art thou wounded?"

The youth answered not, but rushed into the midst of the forest in hopes of finding the chief.

The officer now mustered his men; thirteen had fallen in the battle, and three were missing. Of the banditti, twenty-four were killed and twenty-three were prisoners; the rest had escaped, among whom, unfortunately, was Koenigsmark.

"Who are the three missing?" said Steinfort, dreading the answer.

"Your two friends and one hussar; but calm yourself; recollect we have seen Theodore since the combat was ended; he is in search of the chief, and perhaps Fredrich is engaged in the same pursuit."

As they were conversing, Theodore slowly advanced. He led the officer and Steinfort to a clump of trees at some distance from the field of battle. He pointed to the corpse of Fredrich. "There lies my noble preserver; he fell by the hands of Koenigsmark: I have in vain sought the murderer, but he shall not escape; I will seek him even in hell."

"Unfortunate young man," said the officer, "I pity him; but we must retire to the nearest inn, and give succour to the wounded men. To-morrow we must send and bury the dead ruffians in the forest, and fetch away those brave men that have fallen in our cause, and bestow on them military honours."

"I will not leave the corpse of my friend here," said Theodore, clapping his hand on his sword.

"I respect your feelings," said the officer; "some of the hussars shall bear it along with us."

The youth pressed his hand, but could not speak. When they arrived at the inn Theodore was surprised to find it the

same as where they first saw Koenigsmark. The officer ordered the prisoners into some stabling, and a strong detachment to guard them.

Fredrich's body was placed in one of the best apartments. Theodore sat by it, and gave way to his grief.

Steinfort's wound was not dangerous; being only in the flesh, the ball was easily extracted, and he retired to a chamber. In the morning the officer, having taken a kind leave of Steinfort and the unhappy Theodore, withdrew with the hussars and their prisoners. At six in the evening, the body of Fredrich was buried in the village churchyard. The officer ordered military honours to be paid it—an attention that greatly pleased Theodore. As soon as the grave was closed, a mist arose, and the form of a venerable old man was gradually perceived. Theodore and his friend viewed it with silent woe. A hollow voice pronounced:

"Adelstan is no more! but he forgave Fredrich on his death-bed." It then vanished.

"Thank God!" said Theodore, "my friend was forgiven; his shade will be at rest."

When they returned to the inn the officer accompanied them.

Bolfield looked dejected. They inquired the cause. He replied that Stella, the maniac of the wood, was here, and that she came frequently to his house after wandering whole days in the forest.

The officer and the two friends followed Bolfield.

Stella was seated by the fire; she noticed not their entrance. They contemplated her. She had some remains of beauty. Her dark eyes sparkled through her matted hair, her cheeks were livid, and her form emaciated, and exhibited symptoms of despair; her legs and feet were bare, and full of scars, and they now bled from recent wounds in her wanderings.

Of a sudden she started and said, "Hark! I hear his bones rattle; the wind whistles through them—it is cold to

my bosom. O Raymond, thou did not love poor Stella!" With these words she hurried away, and soon disappeared in the forest.

They besought Bolfield to acquaint them with her story.

"It is a dismal one," said he; "my heart is always oppressed when I behold her. Among the youths who strove to win her was Raymond, the son of an honest carpenter. He was the handsomest youth in the village, and had a noble mind. I soon perceived he had made an impression on the damsel's heart. At my entreaties she deposed to me, and owned her love, and told me that Raymond wished to appoint a day for their nuptials. I thought it singular he should conceal his sentiments from me; however, I determined, if he meant honourably, to make them happy. I went to his father, and revealed all to him, and asked him if Raymond deserved Stella. 'Dear Bolfield,' he replied, 'he behaves well to me, but he seldom sleeps at home; that makes me uneasy. I often ask him which of his friends he goes to, but he only gives me evasive answers; and when he returns in the morning he does not appear to have slept.' When I heard this I lamented that Stella loved him, for I suspected he kept company, and was addicted to gaming, as he dressed better than any other youth in the village. I told the damsel on my return that she would oblige me by deferring her nuptials for a few weeks. She pressed so much for a reason that I was obliged to tell what my friend had said.

"Her eyes filled with tears. 'I will obey you,' said she, and hurried away to conceal her emotion.

"Before a week had elapsed she grew pale, her spirits fled; and I perceived how fatally dear Raymond was to her. Trusting her virtues would reclaim her husband, if he was really a gamester, I resolved to forward their nuptials, and imparted my intentions to Stella. She was overjoyed. I sent for Raymond and told him their marriage should take place in two days. I observed him keenly; he endeavoured

to express his love with warmth; but ah! how unlike the genuine fondness of Stella! I felt distressed, but it was too late to recede. In the evening I presented him to all my friends as the intended husband of my adopted child. They congratulated the young couple, and offered to assist them with money, if they wished to set up in business. The next day an Hungarian nobleman arrived at my house. He told me that he expected his servant in the evening with a considerable sum of money, and asked if there was any danger. I answered that there was certainly a banditti investing the forest, but that if he came the direct road from Malda, he was safe. The nobleman said he ordered him to come that way, and appeared satisfied.

"Raymond dined with us, and left the house soon after, pretending business, in consequence of his approaching nuptials, but said he would return in the evening. At sunset the sky was overcast with clouds, the rain fell in torrents, and the howling wind added horror to the scene. An Austrian officer, who spent almost every evening at my house, entered into conversation with the nobleman.

"'This is a dreary evening,' remarked he. 'Yes,' replied the Hungarian, 'I wish my servant was arrived; I should not like to travel the forest at this hour; it must be dangerous.' 'Is it robbers or apparitions that you fear?' said the officer. The nobleman hesitated. 'I see,' continued the Austrian, 'that, in common with many others, you believe in supernatural visions.'

"The nobleman did not deny what the officer said, but appeared confused The Austrian said, 'You have seen the handsome girl who lives at the inn; her strength of mind is great, she neither fears ghosts nor hobgoblins. I would lay any wager that she would not be afraid to go this moment to the old church, that you can see by the light of the moon yonder; the churchyard is on the other side of it, at the extremity of which is a large elder tree. I am convinced that if I ask her she will go fearlessly over the new-made

grave, and return with a bough of that tree, as a proof of her courage.' 'I am of opinion that you would lose,' said the Hungarian; 'I do not think there exists a female who would venture through the cloisters of that old church at this dismal hour.' The sum agreed on was instantly deposited. 'Bolfield,' said the Austrian, 'speak to Stella, and ask her if she would make me win a wager.' I mentioned it to her; she good-naturedly consented. Gay and happy at the thought of soon being Raymond's wife, she ran with a light heart to the cloisters. She traversed the churchyard, and with a steady hand plucked a bough from the alder tree.

"As she returned through the cloisters, she thought she heard a groan; and an indescribable horror took possession of her soul when she heard footsteps approaching. Almost fainting, she concealed herself behind one of the arches. By the moon's beam she perceived two men bearing a wounded wretch, from whose dying lips had issued the groan which met her ear. Stella believed that moment was her last—she thought of Raymond! Love and terror filled her bosom

"As the assassins approached, a sudden gust of wind blew off the hat of one of them; it fell at Stella's feet 'I must pick it up,' said the ruffian, with an oath. 'Let us conceal the body,' said his companion; 'you can then search for your hat.' They passed close to the trembling Stella, but the arch concealed her.

"When they were gone on some way, she felt her courage revive. She snatched up the hat, and flew back to the inn. She rushed into the room where the nobleman and the officer were waiting her return. 'There is the bough,' said she faintly, without knowing what she did. She looked at the hat which she held. She uttered a piercing shriek, and fell senseless. It was Raymond's hat! When I saw his name in it I partly guessed what had happened; I ordered the servants to take care of the unfortunate Stella, and I ran

to Raymond's father, but he had not seen his son since the morning. I rushed out of the house, determined to know what was become of the youth. Alas! I had not far to go—I met a detachment of hussars conducting two prisoners. I approached, and beheld Raymond and another in fetters; before them some hussars carried a dead body. I was more shocked than surprised. The sergeant who commanded told me that the body must be left at my house, as it might be recognised by some travellers. When we approached, several gentlemen came out of the inn to learn the reason of the crowd that was assembled. As soon as the Hungarian officer saw the corpse, he exclaimed, 'O God! this is my servant, whom I expected to bring me my money!' The sergeant said he had been searched, but no money was found on him. The nobleman desired the ruffian's pockets might be examined; the whole of the money was found on Raymond. The nobleman regarded him attentively 'Heaven!' said he, 'this is the youth who was to have married poor Stella; how I pity her!'

"I hastened into the house to inquire after the damsel. The servants told me she was in a violent fever; the surgeon had bled her, but did not think she would recover. Judge the agony of my feelings! In the morning the murderers were put to the torture, but Raymond bore it with astonishing fortitude, and would make no confession. His companion, less courageous, owned that they joined almost every night with a banditti in the forest; that in the preceding evening Raymond had informed him that an Hungarian nobleman expected his servant with a considerable sum of money, and proposed that they two should attack (and keep the circumstances concealed from the banditti, as they might share the booty between them) him as he entered the village; and that they stabbed him and dragged the body to the old church, where he uttered his last groan.

"An order was issued for the execution of Raymond and

his accomplice. They were hanged in the forest about a quarter of a mile from this place. One of Stella's attendants who did not know the attachment the unfortunate girl had for him, told her that Raymond and another murderer were to be executed that morning. A few minutes after, she rose from her bed and ran into the forest, calling loudly for Raymond. She arrived at the dreadful place the moment he was launched into eternity. She fixed her eyes on the fatal scene, and never smiled more. She has been insane ever since. She wanders in the forest, sleeps on the cold ground, subsists on roots and vegetables, and every day sits some hours beneath the corpse of Raymond His flesh is become food for ravens and vultures, his skeleton remains an awful lesson to murderers; the wind sighs between his bones, and carries that sound which Stella fancies she constantly hears.

"I have tried to detain her, but she is so much more wretched when confined, that I have deemed it a melancholy duty to let her go perfectly unconstrained, but her miseries cannot endure much longer," Bolfield concluded, and the friends sat reflecting on the pathetic tale, when a messenger entered and gave a letter to Theodore.

"Read it," said he to Steinfort; "I have not courage, my heart forebodes some melancholy tidings"

Steinfort glanced over the contents and turned pale. "Kaempfer is no more," said he; "he wished to see us in his last moments, but that consolation was denied him. Herman wishes to see us immediately."

The officer offered to accompany them with a small party of hussars which had just arrived at the inn for orders

Arrived at Koningsal, they were met by Herman, who exclaimed, "Adelaide escaped just now with her infant from one of her attendants; I fear she is wandering in the forest."

Theodore rushed through the trees, and his friends followed him. For an hour his search was fruitless.

Theodore stumbled over something that the darkness of the night had prevented him from observing. It was Adelaide's body! He started with horror, but on examination he discovered that she was not dead, but in a swoon; her infant was nowhere to be found. He committed Adelaide to the care of Herman, and, frantic with rage, explored every avenue. Steinfort followed his example. It fortunately happened that a little dog belonging to Herman pursued the track of the latter.

"By the advice of a hussar, they put the animal on the scent. They carefully followed the dog, and proceeded in various directions upwards of three miles. At length he wagged his tail, fawned on Steinfort, and entered a thicket.

"Be on your guard," said the hussar, "some one is near."

Theodore and Steinfort drew their swords, and proceeded with caution. They heard a rustling noise among the branches, and the dog barked violently. Theodore darted among the trees and beheld Koenigsmark with a drawn sword in his hand. The youth hastened to attack him, but at that instant two men glided along at some little distance, and the cries of an infant were heard.

"It is Rosenberg's child," said he, and was flying towards the place when Koenigsmark, desirous to prevent him from rescuing the infant, exclaimed:

"Coward, dost thou fear to attack me?"

"Coward!" repeated Theodore. "Steinfort, save the child. Now, Koenigsmark, we meet for the last time."

"Touch him not," said he to the hussars who were preparing to seize him, "he is my foe." He aimed a blow at his adversary, but his sword met his and glanced aside. The combat became furious, but the hussars dared not disobey Theodore's orders, yet they thought it madness to suffer him to expose himself in that manner, as Koenigsmark evinced equal resolution with himself.

"I have rescued the child," cried Steinfort, loudly, and passed with it in his arms.

"Heaven he praised!" said Theodore.

He could not repress a look, and turned hastily round. Koenigsmark took advantage to wound him in the left arm; he aimed at his heart, but Theodore fortunately saw the light of the steel, and parried the thrust. Furious with his wound, he plunged upon him and brought him to the ground.

"Do not kill him, Theodore," said Steinfort, "thou hast conquered, let that suffice thee; the villain must not die so honourable a death."

Theodore reluctantly agreed. The hussars bound Koenigsmark, and compelled him to walk between two of them.

Theodore then took the infant and clasped it to his breast.

Steinfort related that the villains made no resistance, but when they saw themselves pursued flung down the child, which happily fell on a heap of dried leaves.

When they arrived at Adelaide's abode, Theodore ordered that Koenigsmark might be brought. When they entered the room, Adelaide was laid on a bed in the most hopeless state.

Just at this instant the child cried—Adelaide started and shrieked wildly; her every nerve seemed to receive tenfold vigour. She threw herself from the couch, and fell senseless on the floor.

A flash of lightning illuminated the chamber, and a tremendous peal of thunder succeeded.

In the midst of the apartment stood the awful shade of Rosenberg; it approached Koenigsmark, and shook a dagger over him, three drops of boiling blood fell on the murderer. The apparition turned to Adelaide, who still lay on the ground. It waved its hand. Her senses returned at that dread signal; she raised herself, contemplated the shade without terror, and gently said, "I follow thee." She turned a fond eye on her infant, and her spirit fled its terrestrial abode!

Theodore, much affected, delivered Koenigsmark to the officer, and then wrote to Monteculi, and related recent events, requesting his orders concerning the funeral of Kaempfer and Adelaide, and the disposal of the dear little orphan. At daybreak the officer entered, and requested Theodore, Steinfort and Herman to accompany him to the the village. Theodore called Adelaide's attendants, and besought them to be tenderly careful of the babe.

Before they arrived at the village a great crowd followed, every one anxious to behold the terror of Bohemia, as he was justly called.

When they arrived at the officer's house, he dispatched an express to Vienna, respecting Koenigsmark, and requested their commands. He then proceeded to examine the fallen chief.

"Who art thou?"

"Thou knowest I am Koenigsmark," said he haughtily.

"Is all thy band destroyed?"

"No."

"Where are they, and their number?"

"I am not dastard enough to tell thee"

"I shall find means to compel thee to speak," said the officer. He ordered the rack to be prepared in that part of the village where criminals were usually executed.

Thither was Koenigsmark conveyed His countenance underwent not the least change Notwithstanding his crimes, Theodore and his friends almost pitied him. The orders were given to extend him on the rack; the soldier went to strip him. Suddenly a man with a mask passed close to him and, with an awe-inspiring voice, said, "Thus I perform my promise," and sheathed a dagger in the heart of Koenigsmark, who with a loud laugh fell, and expired instantly.

The stranger had disappeared, and though everyone had their eye on him, none could tell which way he went.

"It was certainly an evil spirit," said Steinfort.

Theodore was lost in thought.

The officer feared he should be called in question by the Court of Vienna, for suffering Koenigsmark's death, but the three friends consoled him by the assurance that they would bear witness of the mysterious event, and that he was not to blame.

Monteculi arrived in the evening, accompanied by Marshall Daun and Colonel Ingelheim; they immediately called for Theodore and Steinfort, assured them of their united friendship, promised them speedy promotions in the army, and Theodore was appointed Monteculi's aide-de-camp, in the room of the unfortunate Rosenberg.

Colonel Kaempfer and Adelaide had magnificent funerals, by the order of the venerable Monteculi. He adopted Rosenberg's child for his own, and in case of his death, Theodore and Steinfort were appointed her guardians and protectors.

After taking an affectionate leave of Herman, the brave youths departed with their patrons for the army, where they met with brilliant success, and gained the love of everyone.

JOHANN AUGUST MUSÆUS

(1735–1787)

DUMB LOVE

(Translated by THOMAS CARLYLE)

THERE was once a wealthy merchant, Melchior of Bremen by name, who used to stroke his beard with a contemptuous grin, when he heard the Rich Man in the Gospel preached of, whom, in comparison, he reckoned little better than a petty shopkeeper. Melchior had money in such plenty, that he floored his dining-room all over with a coat of solid dollars. In those frugal times, as in our own, a certain luxury prevailed among the rich; only then it had a more substantial shape than now. But though this pomp of Melchior's was sharply censured by his fellow-citizens and consorts, it was, in truth, directed more to trading speculation than to mere vain-glory. The cunning Bremer easily observed, that those who grudged and blamed this seeming vanity, would but diffuse the reputation of his wealth, and so increase his credit. He gained his purpose to the full; the sleeping capital of old dollars, so judiciously set up to public inspection in the parlour, brought interest a hundredfold, by the silent surety which it offered for his bargains in every market; yet, at last, it became a rock on which the welfare of his family made shipwreck.

Melchior of Bremen died of a surfeit at a city-feast, without having time to set his house in order; and left all his goods and chattels to an only son, in the bloom of life, and just arrived at the years when the laws allowed him to take

possession of his inheritance. Franz Melcherson was a brilliant youth, endued by nature with the best capacities. His exterior was gracefully formed, yet firm and sinewy withal; his temper was cheery and jovial, as if hung-beef and old French wine had joined to influence his formation. On his cheeks bloomed health; and from his brown eyes looked mirthfulness and love of joy. He was like a marrowy plant, which needs but water and the poorest ground to make it grow to strength; but which, in too fat a soil, will shoot into luxuriant overgrowth, without fruit or usefulness. The father's heritage, as often happens, proved the ruin of the son. Scarce had he felt the joy of being sole possessor and disposer of a large fortune, when he set about endeavouring to get rid of it as of a galling burden; began to play the Rich Man in the Gospel to the very letter; went clothed in fine apparel, and fared sumptuously every day. No feast at the bishop's court could be compared for pomp and superfluity with his; and never while the town of Bremen shall endure, will such another public dinner be consumed, as it yearly got from him; for to every burgher of the place he gave a Krusel-soup and a jug of Spanish wine. For this, all people cried: "Long life to him!" and Franz became the hero of the day.

In this unceasing whirl of joviality, no thought was cast upon the Balancing of Entries, which, in those days, was the merchant's vade-mecum, though in our times it is going out of fashion, and for want of it the tongue of the commercial beam too frequently declines with a magnetic virtue from the vertical position. Some years passed on without the joyful Franz's noticing a diminution in his incomes; for at his father's death every chest and coffer had been full. The voracious host of table-friends, the airy company of jesters, gamesters, parasites, and all who had their living by the prodigal son, took special care to keep reflection at a distance from him; they hurried him from one enjoyment to another; kept him constantly in play, lest in some sober moment

Reason might awake, and snatch him from their plundering claws.

But at last their well of happiness went suddenly dry; old Melchior's casks of gold were now run off even to the lees. One day, Franz ordered payment of a large account; his cash-keeper was not in a state to execute the precept, and returned it with a protest. This counter-incident flashed keenly through the soul of Franz; yet he felt nothing else but anger and vexation at his servant, to whose unaccountable perversity, by no means to his own ill husbandry, he charged the present disorder in his finances. Nor did he give himself the trouble to investigate the real condition of the business; but after flying to the common Fool's-litany, and thundering out some scores of curses, he transmitted to his shoulder-shrugging steward the laconic order: Find means.

Bill-brokers, usurers and money-changers now came into play. For high interest, fresh sums were poured into the empty coffers; the silver flooring of the dining-room was then more potent in the eyes of creditors, than in these times of ours the promissory obligation of the Congress of America, with the whole thirteen United States to back it. This palliative succeeded for a season; but, underhand, the rumour spread about the town, that the silver flooring had been privily removed, and a stone one substituted in its stead. The matter was immediately, by application of the lenders, legally inquired into, and discovered to be actually so. Now, it could not be denied, that a marble-floor, worked into nice mosaic, looked much better in a parlour, than a sheet of dirty, tarnished dollars: the creditors, however, paid so little reverence to the proprietor's refinement of taste, that on the spot they, one and all, demanded payment of their several moneys; and as this was not complied with, they proceeded to procure an act of bankruptcy; and Melchior's house, with its appurtenances, offices, gardens, parks and furniture, were sold by public auction, and their late

owner, who in this extremity had screened himself from jail by some chicanery of law, judicially ejected.

It was now too late to moralise on his absurdities, since philosophical reflections could not alter what was done, and the most wholesome resolutions would not bring him back his money. According to the principles of this our cultivated century, the hero at this juncture ought to have retired with dignity from the stage, or in some way terminated his existence; to have entered on his travels into foreign parts, or opened his carotid artery; since in his native town he could live no longer as a man of honour. Franz neither did the one nor the other. The *qu'en-dira-t'on*, which French morality employs as bit and curb for thoughtlessness and folly, had never once occurred to the unbridled squanderer in the days of his profusion, and his sensibility was still too dull to feel so keenly the disgrace of his capricious wastefulness. He was like a toper, who has been in drink, and on awakening out of his carousal, cannot rightly understand how matters are or have been with him. He lived according to the manner of unprospering spendthrifts; repented not, lamented not. By good fortune, he had picked some relics from the wreck; a few small heirlooms of the family; and these secured him for a time from absolute starvation.

He engaged a lodging in a remote alley, into which the sun never shone throughout the year, except for a few days about the solstice, when it peeped for a short while over the high roofs. Here he found the little that his now much-contracted wants required. The frugal kitchen of his landlord screened him from hunger, the stove from cold, the roof from rain, the four walls from wind; only from the pains of tedium he could devise no refuge or resource. The light rabble of parasites had fled away with his prosperity; and of his former friends there was now no one that knew him. Reading had not yet become a necessary of life; people did not yet understand the art of killing time by means of those amusing shapes of fancy which are wont to lodge in empty

heads. There were yet no sentimental, pedagogic, psychologic, popular, simple, comic, or moral tales; no novels of domestic life, no cloister-stories, no romances of the middle ages; and of the innumerable generation of our Henrys, and Adelaides, and Cliffords, and Emmas, no one had as yet lifted up its mantua-maker voice, to weary out the patience of a lazy and discerning public. In those days, knights were still diligently pricking round the tilt-yard; Dietrich of Bern, Hildebrand, Seyfried with the Horns, Rennewart the Strong, were following their snake and dragon hunt, and killing giants and dwarfs of twelve men's strength. The venerable epos, *Theuerdank*, was the loftiest ideal of German art and skill, the latest product of our native wit, but only for the cultivated minds, the poets and thinkers of the age. Franz belonged to none of these classes, and had therefore nothing to employ himself upon, except that he tuned his lute, and sometimes twanged a little on it; then, by way of variation, took to looking from the window, and instituted observations on the weather; out of which, indeed, there came no inference a whit more edifying than from all the labours of the most rheumatic meteorologist of this present age. Meanwhile his turn for observation ere long found another sort of nourishment, by which the vacant space in his head and heart was at once filled

In the narrow lane right opposite his window dwelt an honest matron, who, in hope of better times, was earning a painful living by the long threads, which, assisted by a marvellously fair daughter, she winded daily from her spindle. Day after day the couple spun a length of yarn, with which the whole town of Bremen, with its walls and trenches, and all its suburbs, might have been begirt. These two spinners had not been born for the wheel; they were of good descent, and had lived of old in pleasant affluence. The fair Meta's father had once had a ship of his own on the sea, and, freighting it himself, had yearly sailed to Antwerp; but a heavy storm had sunk the vessel, "with man and mouse,"

and a rich cargo, into the abysses of the ocean, before Meta had passed the years of her childhood. The mother, a staid and reasonable woman, bore the loss of her husband and all her fortune with a wise composure; in her need she refused, out of noble pride, all help from the charitable sympathy of her relations and friends; considering it as shameful alms, so long as she believed, that in her own activity she might find a living by the labour of her hands. She gave up her large house, and all her costly furniture, to the rigorous creditors of her ill-fated husband, hired a little dwelling in the lane, and span from early morning till late night, though the trade went sore against her, and she often wetted the thread with her tears. Yet by this diligence she reached her object, of depending upon no one, and owing no mortal any obligation. By and by she trained her growing daughter to the same employment; and lived so thriftily, that she laid-by a trifle of her gainings, and turned it to account by carrying on a little trade in flax.

She, however, nowise purposed to conclude her life in these poor circumstances; on the contrary, the honest dame kept up her heart with happy prospects into the future, and hoped that she should once more attain a prosperous situation, and in the autumn of her life enjoy her woman's-summer. Nor were these hopes grounded altogether upon empty dreams of fancy, but upon a rational and calculated expectation. She saw her daughter budding up like a spring rose, no less virtuous and modest than she was fair; and with such endowments of art and spirit, that the mother felt delight and comfort in her, and spared the morsel from her own lips, that nothing might be wanting in an education suitable to her capacities. For she thought, that if a maiden could come up to the sketch which Solomon, the wise friend of woman, has left of the ideal of a perfect wife, it could not fail that a pearl of such price would be sought after, and bidden for, or ornament some good man's house; for beauty combined with virtue, in the days of Mother Brigitta, were as

important in the eyes of wooers, as, in our days, both combined with fortune. Besides, the number of suitors was in those times greater; it was then believed that the wife was the most essential, not, as in our refined economical theory, the most superfluous item in the household. The fair Meta, it is true, bloomed only like a precious rare flower in the greenhouse, not under the gay, free sky; she lived in maternal oversight and keeping, sequestered and still; was seen in no walk, in no company; and scarcely once in the year passed through the gate of her native town; all which seemed utterly to contradict her mother's principle. The old Lady E * * of Memel understood it otherwise, in her time. She sent the itinerant Sophia, it is clear as day, from Memel into Saxony, simply on a marriage speculation, and attained her purpose fully. How many hearts did the wandering nymph set on fire, how many suitors courted her! Had she stayed at home, as a domestic modest maiden, she might have bloomed away in the remoteness of her virgin cell, without even making a conquest of Kunbuz the schoolmaster Other times, other manners. Daughters with us are a sleeping capital, which must be put in circulation if it is to yield any interest, of old, they were kept like thrifty savings, under lock and key; yet the bankers still knew where the treasure lay concealed, and how it might be come at. Mother Brigitta steered towards some prosperous son-in-law, who might lead her back from the Babylonian captivity of the narrow lane into the land of superfluity, flowing with milk and honey; and trusted firmly, that in the urn of Fate, her daughter's lot would not be coupled with a blank.

One day, while neighbour Franz was looking from the window, making observations on the weather, he perceived the charming Meta coming with her mother from church, whither she went daily, to attend mass. In the times of his abundance, the unstable voluptuary had been blind to the fairer half of the species; the finer feelings were still slumber-

ing in his breast; and all his senses had been overclouded by the ceaseless tumult of debauchery. But now the stormy waves of extravagance had subsided; and in this deep calm, the smallest breath of air sufficed to curl the mirror surface of his soul. He was enchanted by the aspect of this, the loveliest female figure that had ever flitted past him. He abandoned from that hour the barren study of the winds and clouds, and now instituted quite another set of Observations for the furtherance of Moral Science, and one which afforded to himself much finer occupation. He soon extracted from his landlord intelligence of this fair neighbour, and learned most part of what we know already.

Now rose on him the first repentant thought for his heedless squandering; there awoke a secret good-will in his heart to this new acquaintance; and for her sake he wished that his paternal inheritance were his own again, that the lovely Meta might be fitly dowered with it. His garret in the narrow lane was now so dear to him, that he would not have exchanged it with the Schudding itself.[1] Throughout the day he stirred not from the window, watching for an opportunity of glancing at the dear maiden; and when she chanced to show herself, he felt more rapture in his soul than did Horrox in his Liverpool Observatory, when he saw, for the first time, Venus passing over the disk of the Sun.

Unhappily the watchful mother instituted counter-observations, and ere long discovered what the lounger on the other side was driving at; and as Franz, in the capacity of spendthrift, already stood in very bad esteem with her, this daily gazing angered her so much, that she shrouded her lattice as with a cloud, and drew the curtains close together. Meta had the strictest orders not again to appear at the window; and when her mother went with her to mass, she drew a rain-cap over her face, disguised her like a

[1] One of the largest buildings in Bremen, where the meetings of the merchants are usually held

favourite of the Grand Signior, and hurried till she turned the corner with her, and escaped the eyes of the lier-in-wait.

Of Franz, it was not held that penetration was his master faculty; but Love awakens all the talents of the mind. He observed, that by his imprudent spying, he had betrayed himself; and he thenceforth retired from the window, with the resolution not again to look out at it, though the *Venerabile* itself were carried by. On the other hand, he meditated some invention for proceeding with his observations in a private manner; and without great labour, his combining spirit mastered it.

He hired the largest looking-glass that he could find, and hung it up in his room, with such an elevation and direction, that he could distinctly see whatever passed in the dwelling of his neighbours. Here, as for several days the watcher did not come to light, the screens by degrees went asunder; and the broad mirror now and then could catch the form of the noble maid, and, to the great refreshment of the virtuoso, cast it truly back. The more deeply love took root in his heart,[1] the more widely did his wishes extend. It now struck him that he ought to lay his passion open to the fair Meta, and investigate the corresponding state of her opinions. The commonest and readiest way which lovers, under such a constellation of their wishes, strike into, was in his position inaccessible. In those modest ages, it was always difficult for Paladins in love to introduce themselves to daughters of the family; toilette calls were not in fashion; trustful interviews *tête-à-tête* were punished by the loss of reputation to the female sharer; promenades, esplanades, masquerades, pic-nics, goutés, soupés, and other inventions of modern wit for forwarding sweet courtship, had not then been hit upon; yet, notwithstanding, all things went their course, much as they do with us. Gossipings, weddings, lyke-wakes, were, especially in our Imperial Cities, privileged vehicles for carrying on soft secrets, and expediting marriage contracts;

[1] Ἀπὸ τοῦ ὁρᾶν ἔρχεται τὸ ἐρᾶν.

hence the old proverb, *One wedding makes a score.* But a poor runagate no man desired to number among his baptismal relatives; to no nuptial dinner, to no wake-supper, was he bidden. The by-way of negotiating, with the woman, with the young maid, or any other serviceable spirit of a go-between, was here locked up. Mother Brigitta had neither maid nor woman; the flax and yarn trade passed through no hands but her own; and she abode by her daughter as closely as her shadow.

In these circumstances, it was clearly impossible for neighbour Franz to disclose his heart to the fair Meta, either verbally or in writing. Ere long, however, he invented an idiom, which appeared expressly calculated for the utterance of the passions. It is true, the honour of the first invention is not his. Many ages ago, the sentimental Celadons of Italy and Spain had taught melting harmonies, in serenades beneath the balconies of their dames to speak the language of the heart; and it is said that this melodious pathos had especial virtue in love-matters; and, by the confession of the ladies, was more heart-affecting and subduing, than of yore the oratory of the reverend Chrysostom, or the pleadings of Demosthenes and Tully. But of all this the simple Bremer had not heard a syllable; and consequently the invention of expressing his emotions in symphonious notes, and trilling them to his beloved Meta, was entirely his own.

In an hour of sentiment, he took his lute: he did not now tune it merely to accompany his voice, but drew harmonious melodies from its strings; and Love, in less than a month, had changed the musical scraper to a new Amphion. His first efforts did not seem to have been noticed; but soon the population of the lane were all ear, every time the dilettante struck a note. Mothers hushed their children, fathers drove the noisy urchins from the doors, and the performer had the satisfaction to observe that Meta herself, with her alabaster hand, would sometimes open the window as he began to prelude. If he succeeded in enticing her to lend an ear, his

voluntaries whirled along in gay *allegro*, or skipped away in mirthful jigs; but if the turning of the spindle, or her thrifty mother, kept her back, a heavy-laden *andante* rolled over the bridge of the sighing lute, and expressed, in languishing modulations, the feeling of sadness which love-pain poured over his soul.

Meta was no dull scholar; she soon learned to interpret this expressive speech. She made various experiments to try whether she had rightly understood it, and found that she could govern at her will the dilettante humours of the unseen lute-twanger; for your silent modest maidens, it is well known, have a much sharper eye than those giddy flighty girls, who hurry with the levity of butterflies from one object to another, and take proper heed of none. She felt her female vanity a little flattered; and it pleased her that she had it in her power, by a secret magic, to direct the neighbouring lute, and tune it now to the note of joy, now to the whimpering moan of grief. Mother Brigitta, on the other hand, had her head so constantly employed with her traffic on the small scale, that she minded none of these things; and the sly little daughter took especial care to keep her in the dark respecting the discovery; and, instigated either by some touch of kindness for her cooing neighbour, or perhaps by vanity, that she might show her hermeneutic penetration, meditated on the means of making some symbolical response to these harmonious apostrophes to her heart. She expressed a wish to have flower-pots on the outside of the window; and to grant her this innocent amusement was a light thing for the mother, who no longer feared the coney-catching neighbour, now that she no longer saw him with her eyes.

Henceforth Meta had a frequent call to tend her flowers, to water them, to bind them up, and guard them from approaching storms, and watch their growth and flourishing. With inexpressible delight the happy Franz explained this hieroglyphic altogether in his favour; and the speaking lute did not fail to modulate his glad emotions, through the

alley, into the heedful ear of the fair friend of flowers. This, in her tender virgin heart, worked wonders. She began to be secretly vexed, when Mother Brigitta, in her wise table-talk, in which at times she spent an hour chatting with her daughter, brought their melodious neighbour to her bar, and called him a losel and a sluggard, or compared him with the Prodigal in the Gospel. She always took his part; threw the blame of his ruin on the sorrowful temptations he had met with; and accused him of nothing worse than not having fitly weighed the golden proverb, *A penny saved is a penny got.* Yet she defended him with cunning prudence; so that it rather seemed as if she wished to help the conversation, than took any interest in the thing itself.

While Mother Brigitta within her four walls was inveighing against the luckless spendthrift, he on his side entertained the kindest feelings towards her; and was considering diligently how he might, according to his means, improve her straitened circumstances, and divide with her the little that remained to him, and so she might never notice that a portion of his property had passed over into hers. This pious outlay, in good truth, was specially intended not for the mother, but the daughter. Underhand he had come to know, that the fair Meta had a hankering for a new gown, which her mother had excused herself from buying, under pretext of hard times. Yet he judged quite accurately, that a present of a piece of stuff, from an unknown hand, would scarcely be received, or cut into a dress for Meta; and that he should spoil all, if he stept forth and avowed himself the author of the benefaction. Chance afforded him an opportunity to realise this purpose in the way he wished.

Mother Brigitta was complaining to a neighbour, that flax was very dull; that it cost her more to purchase than the buyers of it would repay; and that hence this branch of industry was nothing better, for the present, than a withered bough. Eaves-dropper Franz did not need a second telling; he ran directly to the goldsmith, sold his mother's ear-rings,

bought some stones of flax, and, by means of a negotiatress, whom he gained, had it offered to the mother for a cheap price. The bargain was concluded; and it yielded so richly, that on All-Saints' day the fair Meta sparkled in a fine new gown. In this decoration, she had such a splendour in her watchful neighbour's eyes, that he would have overlooked the Eleven Thousand Virgins, all and sundry, had it been permitted him to choose a heart's-mate from among them, and fixed upon the charming Meta.

But just as he was triumphing in the result of his innocent deceit, the secret was betrayed. Mother Brigitta had resolved to do the flax-retailer, who had brought her that rich gain, a kindness in her turn; and was treating her with a well-sugared rice-pap, and a quarter-stoop of Spanish sack. This dainty set in motion not only the toothless jaw, but also the garrulous tongue of the crone; she engaged to continue the flax-brokerage, should her consigner feel inclined, as from good grounds she guessed he would. One word produced another; Mother Eve's two daughters searched, with the curiosity peculiar to their sex, till at length the brittle seal of female secrecy gave way. Meta grew pale with affright at the discovery, which would have charmed her, had her mother not partaken of it. But she knew her strict ideas of morals and decorum; and these gave her doubts about the preservation of her gown. The serious dame herself was no less struck at the tidings, and wished, on her side too, that she alone had got intelligence of the specific nature of her flax-trade; for she dreaded that this neighbourly munificence might make an impression on her daughter's heart, which would derange her whole calculations. She resolved, therefore, to root out the still tender germ of this weed, in the very act, from the maiden heart. The gown, in spite of all the tears and prayers of its lovely owner, was first hypothecated, and next day transmitted to the huckster's shop; the money raised from it, with the other profits of the flax speculation, accurately

reckoned up, were packed together, and under the name of an old debt, returned to 'Mr. Franz Melcherson, in Bremen,' by help of the Hamburg post. The receiver, nothing doubting, took the little lot of money as an unexpected blessing; wished that all his father's debtors would clear off their old scores as conscientiously as this honest unknown person; and had not the smallest notion of the real position of affairs. The talking brokeress, of course, was far from giving him a true disclosure of her babbling; she merely told him that Mother Brigitta had given up her flax-trade.

Meanwhile, the mirror taught him, that the aspects over the way had altered greatly in a single night. The flower-pots were entirely vanished; and the cloudy veil again obscured the friendly horizon of the opposite window. Meta was seldom visible; and if for a moment, like the silver moon, from among her clouds in a stormy night, she did appear, her countenance was troubled, the fire of her eyes was extinguished, and it seemed to him, that, at times, with her finger, she pressed away a pearly tear. This seized him sharply by the heart; and his lute resounded melancholy sympathy in soft Lydian mood. He grieved, and meditated to discover why his love was sad; but all his thinking and imagining were vain. After some days were past, he noticed, to his consternation, that his dearest piece of furniture, the large mirror, had become entirely useless. He set himself one bright morning in his usual nook, and observed that the clouds over the way had, like natural fog, entirely dispersed; a sign which he at first imputed to a general washing; but ere long he saw that, in the chamber, all was waste and empty; his pleasing neighbours had in silence withdrawn the night before, and broken up their quarters.

He might now, once more, with the greatest leisure and convenience, enjoy the free prospect from his window, without fear of being troublesome to any; but for him it was a dead loss to miss the kind countenance of his Platonic love. Mute and stupefied, he stood, as of old his fellow-craftsman,

the harmonious Orpheus, when the dear shadow of his Eurydice again vanished down to Orcus; and if the bedlam humour of these "noble minds," who raved among us through the bygone lustre, but have now like drones disappeared with the earliest frost, had then been ripened to existence, this calm of his would certainly have passed into a sudden hurricane. The least he could have done, would have been to pull his hair, to trundle himself about upon the ground, or run his head against the wall, and break his stove and window. All this he omitted; from the very simple cause that true love never makes men fools, but rather is the universal remedy for healing sick minds of their foolishness, for laying gentle fetters on extravagance, and guiding youthful giddiness from the broad way of ruin to the narrow path of reason; for the rake whom love will not recover is lost irrecoverably.

When, once his spirit had assembled its scattered powers he set on foot a number of instructive meditations on the unexpected phenomenon, but too visible in the adjacent horizon. He readily conceived that he was the lever which had effected the removal of the wandering colony: his money-letter, the abrupt conclusion of the flax-trade, and the emigration which had followed thereupon, were like reciprocal exponents to each other, and explained the whole to him. He perceived that Mother Brigitta had got round his secrets, and saw from every circumstance that he was not her hero; a discovery which yielded him but little satisfaction. The symbolic responses of the fair Meta, with her flower-pots, to his musical proposals of love; her trouble, and the tear which he had noticed in her bright eyes shortly before her departure from the lane, again animated his hopes, and kept him in good heart. His first employment was to go in quest, and try to learn where Mother Brigitta had pitched her residence, in order to maintain, by some means or other, his secret understanding with the daughter. It cost him little toil to find her abode; yet he was too

modest to shift his own lodging to her neighbourhood; but satisfied himself with spying out the church where she now attended mass, that he might treat himself once each day with a glance of his beloved. He never failed to meet her as she returned, now here, now there, in some shop or door which she was passing, and salute her kindly; an equivalent for a *billet-doux*, and productive of the same effect.

Had not Meta been brought up in a style too nunlike, and guarded by her rigid mother as a treasure, from the eyes of thieves, there is little doubt that neighbour Franz, with his secret wooing, would have made no great impression on her heart. But she was at the critical age when Mother Nature and Mother Brigitta, with their wise nurture, were perpetually coming into collision. The former taught her, by a secret instinct, the existence of emotions, for which she had no name, and eulogised them as the panacea of life; the latter warned her to beware of the surprisals of a passion, which she would not designate by its true title, but which, as she maintained, was more pernicious and destructive to young maidens than the small-pox itself. The former, in the spring of life, as beseemed the season, enlivened her heart with a genial warmth; the latter wished that it should always be as cold and frosty as an ice-house. These conflicting pedagogic systems of the two good mothers gave the tractable heart of the daughter the direction of a ship which is steered against the wind, and follows neither the wind nor the helm, but a course between the two. She maintained the modesty and virtue which her education, from her youth upwards, had impressed upon her; but her heart continued open to all tender feelings. And as neighbour Franz was the first youth who had awakened these slumbering emotions, she took a certain pleasure in him, which she scarcely owned to herself, but which any less unexperienced maiden would have recognised as love. It was for this that her departure from the narrow lane had gone so near her heart; for this that the little tear had trickled from her beautiful

eyes; for this that, when the watchful Franz saluted her as she came from church, she thanked him so kindly, and grew scarlet to the ears. The lovers had in truth never spoken any word to one another; but he understood her, and she him, so perfectly, that in the most secret interview they could not have explained themselves more clearly; and both contracting parties swore in their silent hearts, each for himself, under the seal of secrecy, the oath of faithfulness to the other.

In the quarter, where Mother Brigitta had now settled, there were likewise neighbours, and among these likewise girl-spiers, whom the beauty of the charming Meta had not escaped. Right opposite their dwelling lived a wealthy Brewer, whom the wags of the part, as he was strong in means, had named the Hop-King. He was a young stout widower, whose mourning year was just concluding, so that now he was entitled, without offending the precepts of decorum, to look about him elsewhere for a new helpmate to his household. Shortly after the departure of his whilom wife, he had in secret entered into an engagement with his Patron Saint, St. Christopher, to offer him a wax-taper as long as a hop-pole, and as thick as a mashing-beam, if he would vouchsafe in this second choice to prosper the desire of his heart. Scarcely had he seen the dainty Meta, when he dreamed that St. Christopher looked upon him, through the window of his bedroom in the second story,[1] and demanded payment of his debt. To the quick widower this seemed a heavenly call to cast out the net without delay. Early in the morning he sent for the brokers of the town, and commissioned them to buy bleached wax; then decked himself like a Syndic, and set forth to expedite his marriage speculation. He had no musical talents, and in the secret symbolic language of love he was no better than a

[1] St Christopher never appears to his favourites, like the other Saints, in a solitary room, encircled with a glory: there is no room high enough to admit him; thus the celestial Son of Anak is obliged to transact all business with his wards outside the window.

blockhead; but he had a rich brewery, a solid mortgage on the city-revenues, a ship on the Weser, and a farm without the gates. With such recommendations he might have reckoned on a prosperous issue to his courtship, independently of all assistance from St. Kit, especially as his bride was without dowry.

According to old use and wont, he went directly to the master hand, and disclosed to the mother, in a kind neighbourly way, his christian intentions towards her virtuous and honourable daughter. No angel's visit could have charmed the good lady more than these glad tidings. She now saw ripening before her the fruit of her prudent scheme, and the fulfilment of her hope again to emerge from her present poverty into her former abundance; she blessed the good thought of moving from the crooked alley, and in the first ebullition of her joy, as a thousand gay ideas were ranking themselves up within her soul, she also thought of neighbour Franz, who had given occasion to it. Though Franz was not exactly her bosom-youth, she silently resolved to gladden him, as the accidental instrument of her rising star, with some secret gift or other, and by this means likewise recompense his well-intended flax-dealing.

In the maternal heart the marriage-articles were as good as signed; but decorum did not permit these rash proceedings in a matter of such moment. She therefore let the motion lie *ad referendum*, to be considered by her daughter and herself; and appointed a term of eight days, after which "she hoped she should have it in her power to give the much-respected suitor a reply that would satisfy him"; all which, as the common manner of proceeding, he took in good part, and with his usual civilities withdrew. No sooner had he turned his back, than spinning-wheel and reel, swingling-stake and hatchel, without regard being paid to their faithful services, and without accusation being lodged against them, were consigned, like some luckless Parliament of Paris, to disgrace, and dismissed as useless implements

into the lumber-room. On returning from mass, Meta was astonished at the sudden catastrophe which had occurred in the apartment; it was all decked out as on one of the three high Festivals of the year. She could not understand how her thrifty mother, on a workday, had so neglectfully put her active hand in her bosom; but before she had time to question the kindly-smiling dame concerning this reform in household affairs, she was favoured by the latter with an explanation of the riddle. Persuasion rested on Brigitta's tongue; and there flowed from her lips a stream of female eloquence, depicting the offered happiness in the liveliest hues which her imagination could lay on. She expected from the chaste Meta the blush of soft virgin bashfulness, which announces the novitiate in love; and then a full resignation of herself to the maternal will. For of old, in proposals of marriage, daughters were situated as our princesses are still; they were not asked about their inclination, and had no voice in the selection of their legal helpmate, save the Yes before the altar.

But Mother Brigitta was in this point widely mistaken; the fair Meta did not at the unexpected announcement grow red as a rose, but pale as ashes. An hysterical giddiness swam over her brain, and she sank fainting in her mother's arms. When her senses were recalled by the sprinkling of cold water, and she had in some degree recovered strength, her eyes overflowed with tears, as if a heavy misfortune had befallen her. From all these symptoms, the sagacious mother easily perceived that the marriage-trade was not to her taste; at which she wondered not a little, sparing neither prayers nor admonitions to her daughter to secure her happiness by this good match, not flout it from her by caprice and contradiction. But Meta could not be persuaded that her happiness depended on a match to which her heart gave no assent. The debates between the mother and the daughter lasted several days, from early morning to late night; the term for decision was approaching; the

sacred taper for St. Christopher, which Og King of Bashan need not have disdained had it been lit for him as a marriage-torch at his espousals, stood in readiness, all beautifully painted with living flowers like a many-coloured light, though the Saint had all the while been so inactive in his client's cause, that the fair Meta's heart was still bolted and barred against him fast as ever.

Meanwhile she had bleared her eyes with weeping, and the maternal rhetoric had worked so powerfully, that, like a flower in the sultry heat, she was drooping together, and visibly fading away. Hidden grief was gnawing at her heart; she had prescribed herself a rigorous fast, and for three days no morsel had she eaten, and with no drop of water moistened her parched lips. By night sleep never visited her eyes; and with all this she grew sick to death, and began to talk about extreme unction. As the tender mother saw the pillar of her hope wavering, and bethought herself that she might lose both capital and interest at once, she found, on accurate consideration, that it would be more advisable to let the latter vanish, than to miss them both; and with kindly indulgence plied into the daughter's will. It cost her much constraint, indeed, and many hard battles, to turn away so advantageous an offer; yet at last, according to established order in household governments, she yielded unconditionally to the inclination of her child, and remonstrated no more with her beloved patient on the subject. As the stout widower announced himself on the appointed day, in the full trust that his heavenly deputy had arranged it all according to his wish, he received, quite unexpectedly, a negative answer, which, however, was sweetened with such a deal of blandishment, that he swallowed it like wine-of-wormwood mixed with sugar. For the rest, he easily accommodated himself to his destiny; and discomposed himself no more about it, than if some bargain for a ton of malt had chanced to come to nothing Nor, on the whole, had he any cause to sorrow without hope. His

native town has never wanted amiable daughters, who come up to the Solomonic sketch, and are ready to make perfect spouses; besides, notwithstanding this unprospered courtship, he depended with firm confidence upon his Patron Saint; who in fact did him such substantial service elsewhere, that ere a month elapsed, he had planted with much pomp his devoted taper at the friendly shrine.

Mother Brigitta was now fain to recall the exiled spinning-tackle from its lumber-room, and again set it in action. All once more went its usual course. Meta soon bloomed out anew, was active in business, and diligently went to mass; but the mother could not hide her secret grudging at the failure of her hopes, and the annihilation of her darling plan; she was splenetic, peevish, and dejected. Her ill-humour had especially the upper hand that day when neighbour Hop-King held his nuptials. As the wedding company proceeded to the church with the town-band bedrumming and becymballing them in the van, she whimpered and sobbed as in the evil hour when the Job's news reached her, that the wild sea had devoured her husband, with ship and fortune. Meta looked at the bridal pomp with great equanimity; even the royal ornaments, the jewels in the myrtle-crown, and the nine strings of true pearls about the neck of the bride, made no impression on her peace of mind; a circumstance in some degree surprising, since a new Paris cap, or any other meteor in the gallery of Mode, will so frequently derange the contentment and domestic peace of an entire parish. Nothing but the heart-consuming sorrow of her mother discomposed her, and overclouded the gay look of her eyes; she strove by a thousand caresses and little attentions to work herself into favour; and she so far succeeded that the good lady grew a little more communicative.

In the evening, when the wedding-dance began, she said, "Ah, child! this merry dance it might have been thy part to lead off. What a pleasure, hadst thou recompensed thy

mother's care and toil with this joy! But thou hast mocked thy happiness, and now I shall never see the day when I am to attend thee to the altar."—"Dear mother," answered Meta, "I confide in Heaven; and if it is written above that I am to be led to the altar, you will surely deck my garland: for when the right wooer comes, my heart will soon say Yes."—"Child, for girls without dowry there is no press of wooers; they are heavy ware to trade with. Nowadays the bachelors are mighty stingy; they court to be happy, not to make happy. Besides, thy planet bodes thee no good; thou wert born in April. Let us see how it is written in the Calendar: 'A damsel born in this month is comely of countenance, slender of shape, but of changeful humour, has a liking to men Should have an eye upon her maiden garland, and so a laughing wooer come, not miss her fortune' Alas, it answers to a hair! The wooer has been here, comes not again: thou hast missed him"—"Ah, mother! let the planet say its pleasure, never mind it; my heart says to me that I should love and honour the man who asks me to be his wife: and if I do not find that man, or he do not seek me, I will live in good courage by the labour of my hands, and stand by you, and nurse you in your old age, as beseems a good daughter. But if the man of my heart do come, then bless my choice, that it may be well with your daughter on the Earth; and ask not whether he is noble, rich, or famous, but whether he is good and honest, whether he loves and is loved."—"Ah, daughter! Love keeps a sorry kitchen, and feeds one poorly, along with bread and salt."—"But yet Unity and Contentment delight to dwell with him, and these season bread and salt with the cheerful enjoyment of our days."

The pregnant subject of bread and salt continued to be sifted till the night was far spent, and the last fiddle in the wedding-dance was resting from its labours. The moderation of the prudent Meta, who, with youth and beauty on her side, pretended only to an altogether bounded happiness,

after having turned away an advantageous offer, led the mother to conjecture that the plan of some such salt trade might already have been sketched in the heart of the virgin. Nor did she fail to guess the trading-partner in the lane, of whom she never had believed that he would be the tree for rooting in the lovely Meta's heart. She had looked upon him only as a wild tendril, that stretches out towards every neighbouring twig, to clamber up by means of it. This discovery procured her little joy; but she gave no hint that she had made it. Only, in the spirit of her rigorous morality, she compared a maiden who lets love, before the priestly benediction, nestle in her heart, to a worm-eaten apple, which is good for the eye, but no longer for the palate, and is laid upon a shelf and no more heeded, for the pernicious worm is eating its internal marrow, and cannot be dislodged. She now despaired of ever holding up her head again in Bremen; submitted to her fate, and bore in silence what she thought was now not to be altered.

Meanwhile the rumour of the proud Meta's having given the rich Hop-King the basket, spread over the town, and sounded even into Franz's garret in the alley. Franz was transported with joy to hear this tale confirmed; and the secret anxiety lest some wealthy rival might expel him from the dear maiden's heart tormented him no more. He was now certain of his object; and the riddle, which for every one continued an insoluble problem, had no mystery for him. Love had already changed a spendthrift into a dilettante; but this for a bride-seeker was the very smallest of recommendations, a gift which in those rude times was rewarded neither with such praise nor with such pudding, as it is in our luxurious century. The fine arts were not then the children of superfluity, but of want and necessity. No travelling professors were at that time known, save the Prague students, whose squeaking symphonies solicited a charitable coin at the doors of the rich. The beloved maiden's sacrifice was too great to be repaid by a serenade.

And now the feeling of his youthful dissipation became a thorn in the soul of Franz. Many a touching monodrama did he begin with an Oh and an Ah, besighing his past madness: "Ah, Meta," said he to himself, "why did I not know thee sooner! Thou hadst been my guardian angel, thou hadst saved me from destruction. Could I live my lost years over again, and be what I was, the world were now Elysium for me, and for thee I would make it an Eden! Noble maiden, thou sacrificest thyself to a wretch, to a beggar, who has nothing in the world but a heart full of love, and despair that he can offer thee no happiness such as thou deservest." Innumerable times, in the paroxysms of these pathetic humours, he struck his brow in fury, with the repentant exclamation: "Oh fool! Oh madman! thou art wise too late."

Love, however, did not leave its working incomplete. It had already brought about a wholesome fermentation in his spirit, a desire to put in use his powers and activity, to try if he might struggle up from his present nothingness: it now incited him to the attempt of executing these good purposes. Among many speculations he had entertained for the recruiting of his wrecked finances, the most rational and promising was this: To run over his father's ledgers, and there note down any small escheats which had been marked as lost, with a view of going through the land, and gleaning, if so were that a lock of wheat might still be gathered from these neglected ears. With the produce of this enterprise, he would then commence some little traffic, which his fancy soon extended over all the quarters of the world. Already, in his mind's eye, he had vessels on the sea, which were freighted with his property. He proceeded rapidly to execute his purpose; changed the last golden fragment of his heritage, his father's hour-egg,[1] into money, and bought with it a riding nag, which was to bear him as a Bremen merchant out into the wide world.

[1] The oldest watches, from the shape they had, were named hour-eggs.

Yet the parting with his fair Meta went sore against his heart. "What will she think," said he to himself, "of this sudden disappearance, when thou shalt no more meet her in the church-way? Will she not regard thee as faithless, and banish thee from her heart?" This thought afflicted him exceedingly; and for a great while he could think of no expedient for explaining to her his intention. But at last inventive Love suggested the idea of signifying to her from the pulpit itself his absence and its purpose. With this view, in the church, which had already favoured the secret understanding of the lovers, he bought a Prayer "for a young Traveller, and the happy arrangement of his affairs"; which was to last, till he should come again and pay his groschen for the Thanksgiving.

At the last meeting, he had dressed himself as for the road; he passed quite near his sweetheart; saluted her expressively, and with less reserve than before; so that she blushed deeply; and Mother Brigitta found opportunity for various marginal notes, which indicated her displeasure at the boldness of this ill-bred fop, in attempting to get speech of her daughter, and with which she entertained the latter not in the most pleasant style the livelong day. From that morning Franz was no more seen in Bremen, and the finest pair of eyes within its circuit sought for him in vain. Meta often heard the Prayer read, but she did not heed it, for her heart was troubled because her lover had become invisible. This disappearance was inexplicable to her; she knew not what to think of it. After the lapse of some months, when time had a little softened her secret care, and she was suffering his absence with a calmer mind, it happened once, as the last appearance of her love was hovering upon her fancy, that this same Prayer struck her as a strange matter. She coupled one thing with another, she guessed the true connection of the business, and the meaning of that notice. And although church litanies and special prayers have not the reputation of extreme potency, and for the worthy

souls that lean on them are but a supple staff, inasmuch as the fire of devotion in the Christian flock is wont to die out at the end of the sermon; yet in the pious Meta's case, the reading of the last Prayer was the very thing which fanned that fire into a flame; and she never neglected, with her whole heart, to recommend the young traveller to his guardian angel.

Under this invisible guidance, Franz was journeying towards Brabant, to call in some considerable sums that were due to him at Antwerp. A journey from Bremen to Antwerp, in the time when road-blockades were still in fashion, and every landlord thought himself entitled to plunder any traveller who had purchased no safe-conduct, and to leave him pining in the ward-room of his tower, was an undertaking of more peril and difficulty, than in our days would attend a journey from Bremen to Kamtschatka: for the *Land-fried* (or Act for suppressing Private Wars), which the Emperor Maximilian had proclaimed, was in force through the Empire, rather as a law than an observance. Nevertheless our solitary traveller succeeded in arriving at the goal of his pilgrimage, without encountering more than a single adventure.

Far in the wastes of Westphalia, he rode one sultry day till nightfall, without reaching any inn Towards evening stormy clouds towered up at the horizon, and a heavy rain wetted him to the skin. To the fondling, who from his youth had been accustomed to all possible conveniences, this was a heavy matter, and he felt himself in great embarrassment how in this condition he should pass the night. To his comfort, when the tempest had moved away, he saw a light in the distance; and soon after, reached a mean peasant hovel, which afforded him but little consolation. The house was more like a cattle-stall than a human habitation; and the unfriendly landlord refused him fire and water, as if he had been an outlaw. For the man was just about to stretch himself upon the straw among his steers; and

too tired to relight the fire on his hearth, for the sake of a stranger. Franz in his despondency uplifted a mournful *miserere*, and cursed the Westphalian steppes with strong maledictions: but the peasant took it all in good part; and blew out his light with great composure, troubling himself no farther about the stranger; for in the laws of hospitality he was altogether uninstructed. But as the wayfarer, standing at the door, would not cease to annoy him with his lamentations, he endeavoured in a civil way to get rid of him, consented to answer, and said: "Master, if you want good entertainment, and would treat yourself handsomely, you could not find what you are seeking here. But ride there to the left hand, through the bushes; a little way behind, lies the Castle of the valiant Eberhard Bronkhorst, a knight who lodges every traveller, as a Hospitaller does the pilgrims from the Holy Sepulchre. He has just one maggot in his head, which sometimes twitches and vexes him; he lets no traveller depart from him unbasted. If you do not lose your way, though he may dust your jacket, you will like your cheer prodigiously."

To buy a mess of pottage, and a stoup of wine, by surrendering one's ribs to the bastinado, is in truth no job for every man, though your spungers and plate-lickers let themselves be tweaked and snubbed, and from rich artists willingly endure all kinds of tar-and-feathering, so their palates be but tickled for the service. Franz considered for a while, and was undetermined what to do; at last he resolved on fronting the adventure. "What is it to me," said he, "whether my back be broken here on miserable straw, or by the Ritter Bronkhorst? The friction will expel the fever which is coming on, and shake me tightly if I cannot dry my clothes." He put spurs to his nag, and soon arrived before a castle-gate of old Gothic architecture; knocked pretty plainly on the iron door, and an equally distinct "Who's there?" resounded from within. To the freezing passenger, the long entrance ceremonial of this

door-keeper precognition was as inconvenient, as are similar delays to travellers who, at barriers and gates of towns, bewail or execrate the despotism of guards and tollmen. Nevertheless he must submit to use and wont, and patiently wait to see whether the philanthropist in the Castle was disposed that night for cudgelling a guest, or would choose rather to assign him a couch under the open canopy.

The possessor of this ancient tower had served, in his youth, as a stout soldier in the Emperor's army, under the bold Georg von Fronsberg, and led a troop of foot against the Venetians; had afterwards retired to repose, and was now living on his property; where, to expiate the sins of his campaigns, he employed himself in doing good works; in feeding the hungry, giving drink to the thirsty, lodging pilgrims, and cudgelling his lodgers out of doors. For he was a rude wild son of war; and could not lay aside his martial tone, though he had lived for many years in silent peace. The traveller, who had now determined for good quarters to submit to the custom of the house, had not waited long till the bolts and locks began rattling within, and the creaking gate-leaves moved asunder, moaning in doleful notes, as if to warn or to deplore the entering stranger. Franz felt one cold shudder after the other running down his back, as he passed in; nevertheless he was handsomely received; some servants hastened to assist him in dismounting; speedily unbuckled his luggage, took his steed to the stable, and its rider to a large well-lighted chamber, where their master was in waiting.

The warlike aspect of this athletic gentleman,—who advanced to meet his guest, and shook him by the hand so heartily, that he was like to shout with pain, and bade him welcome with a Stentor's voice, as if the Stranger had been deaf, and seemed withal to be a person still in the vigour of life, full of fire and strength,—put the timorous wanderer into such a terror, that he could not hide his apprehensions, and began to tremble over all his body.

"What ails you, my young master," asked the Ritter, with a voice of thunder, "that you quiver like an aspen leaf, and look as pale as if Death had you by the throat?"

Franz plucked up a spirit; and considering that his shoulders had at all events the score to pay, his poltroonery passed into a species of audacity.

"Sir," replied he, "you perceive that the rain has soaked me, as if I had swum across the Weser. Let me have my clothes dried or changed; and get me, by way of luncheon, a well-spiced aleberry, to drive away the ague-fit that is quaking through my nerves; then I shall come to heart, in some degree."

"Good!" replied the Knight; "demand what you want; you are at home here."

Franz made himself be served like a bashaw; and having nothing else but currying to expect, he determined to deserve it; he bantered and bullied, in his most imperious style, the servants that were waiting on him; it comes all to one, thought he, in the long-run. "This waistcoat," said he, "would go round a tun; bring me one that fits a little better: this slipper burns like a coal against my corns; pitch it over the lists: this ruff is stiff as a plank, and throttles me like a halter; bring one that is easier, and is not plastered with starch."

At this Bremish frankness, the landlord, far from showing any anger, kept inciting his servants to go briskly through with their commands, and calling them a pack of blockheads, who were fit to serve no stranger. The table being furnished, the Ritter and his guest sat down to it, and both heartily enjoyed their aleberry. The Ritter asked: "Would you have aught farther, by way of supper?"

"Bring us what you have," said Franz, "that I may see how your kitchen is provided."

Immediately appeared the Cook, and placed upon the table a repast with which a duke might have been satisfied. Franz diligently fell-to, without waiting to be pressed.

When he had satisfied himself: "Your kitchen," said he, "is not ill-furnished, I perceive; if your cellar corresponds to it, I shall almost praise your housekeeping."

Bronkhorst nodded to his Butler, who directly filled the cup of welcome with common table wine, tasted, and presented it to his master, and the latter cleared it at a draught to the health of his guest. Franz pledged him honestly, and Bronkhorst asked: "Now, fair sir, what say you to the wine?"

"I say," answered Franz, "that it is bad, if it is the best sort in your catacombs; and good, if it is your meanest number."

"You are a judge," replied the Ritter. "Here, Butler, bring us of the mother-cask."

The Butler put a stoup upon the table, as a sample, and Franz having tasted it, said, "Ay, this is genuine last year's growth; we will stick by this."

The Ritter made a vast pitcher of it be brought in; soon drank himself into hilarity and glee beside his guest; began to talk of his campaigns, how he had been encamped against the Venetians, had broken through their barricado, and butchered the Italian squadrons, like a flock of sheep. In this narrative he rose into such a warlike enthusiasm, that he hewed down bottles and glasses, brandishing the carving-knife like a lance, and in the fire of action came so near his messmate with it, that the latter was in fright for his nose and ears.

It grew late, but no sleep came into the eyes of the Ritter; he seemed to be in his proper element, when he got to speak of his Venetian campaigns. The vivacity of his narration increased with every cup he emptied; and Franz was afraid that this would prove the prologue to the melodrama, in which he himself was to play the most interesting part. To learn whether it was meant that he should lodge within the Castle, or without, he demanded a bumper by way of good-night. Now, he thought, his host would

first force him to drink more wine, and if he refused, would, under pretext of a drinking quarrel, send him forth, according to the custom of the house, with the usual *viaticum*. Contrary to his expectation, the request was granted without remonstrance; the Ritter instantly cut asunder the thread of his narrative, and said: "Time will wait on no one; more of it to-morrow!"

"Pardon me, Herr Ritter," answered Franz, "to-morrow by sunrise I must over hill and dale; I am travelling a far journey to Brabant, and must not linger here. So let me take leave of you to-night, that my departure may not disturb you in the morning."

"Do your pleasure," said the Ritter; "but depart from this you shall not, till I am out of the feathers, to refresh you with a bit of bread, and a toothful of Dantzig, then attend you to the door, and dismiss you according to the fashion of the house."

Franz needed no interpretation of these words. Willingly as he would have excused his host this last civility, attendance to the door, the latter seemed determined to abate no whit of the established ritual. He ordered his servants to undress the stranger, and put him in the guest's-bed; where Franz, once settled on elastic swan's down, felt himself extremely snug, and enjoyed delicious rest; so that ere he fell asleep, he owned to himself that, for such royal treatment, a moderate bastinado was not too dear a price. Soon pleasant dreams came hovering round his fancy. He found his charming Meta in a rosy grove, where she was walking with her mother, plucking flowers. Instantly he hid himself behind a thick-leaved hedge, that the rigorous duenna might not see him. Again his imagination placed him in the alley, and by his looking-glass he saw the snow-white hand of the maiden busied with her flowers; soon he was sitting with her on the grass, and longing to declare his heartfelt love to her, and the bashful shepherd found no words to do it in. He would have dreamed till broad mid-

day, had he not been roused by the sonorous voice and clanking spurs of the Ritter, who, with the earliest dawn, was holding a review of kitchen and cellar, ordering a sufficient breakfast to be readied, and placing every servant at his post, to be at hand when the guest should awake, to dress him, and wait upon him.

It cost the happy dreamer no small struggling to forsake his safe and hospitable bed. He rolled to this side and to that; but the pealing voice of the worshipful Knight came heavy on his heart; and dally as he might, the sour apple must at last be bit. So he rose from his down; and immediately a dozen hands were busy dressing him. The Ritter led him into the parlour, where a small well-furnished table waited them; but now, when the hour of reckoning had arrived, the traveller's appetite was gone. The host endeavoured to encourage him. "Why do you not get to? Come, take somewhat for the raw foggy morning"

"Herr Ritter," answered Franz, "my stomach is still too full of your supper, but my pockets are empty; these I may fill for the hunger that is to come."

With this he began stoutly cramming, and stowed himself with the daintiest and best that was transportable, till all his pockets were bursting. Then, observing that his horse, well curried and equipt, was led past, he took a dram of Dantzig for good-bye, in the thought that this would be the watchword for his host to catch him by the neck, and exercise his household privileges

But, to his astonishment, the Ritter shook him kindly by the hand, as at his first entrance, wished him luck by the way, and the bolted door was thrown open. He loitered not in putting spurs to his nag; and, tip! tap! he was without the gate, and no hair of him harmed.

A heavy stone was lifted from his heart, as he found himself in safety, and saw that he had got away with a whole skin. He could not understand how the landlord had trusted him the shot, which, as he imagined, must have run

pretty high on the chalk: and he embraced with warm love the hospitable man, whose club-law arm he had so much dreaded; and he felt a strong desire to search out, at the fountain-head, the reason or unreason of the ill report which had affrighted him. Accordingly he turned his horse, and cantered back. The Knight was still standing in the gate, and descanting with his servants, for the forwarding of the science of horseflesh, on the breed, shape and character of the nag, and his hard pace he supposed the stranger must have missed something in his travelling gear, and he already looked askance at his servants for such negligence

"What is it, young master," cried he, "that makes you turn again, when you were for proceeding?"

"Ah! yet a word, valiant Knight," cried the traveller. "An ill report has gone abroad, that injures your name and breeding. It is said that you treat every stranger that calls upon you with your best, and then, when he leaves you, let him feel the weight of your strong fists This story I have credited, and spared nothing to deserve my due from you. I thought within myself, His Worship will abate me nothing; I will abate him as little But now you let me go, without strife or peril; and that is what surprises me. Pray tell me, is there any shadow of foundation for the thing; or shall I call the foolish chatter lies next time I hear it?"

The Ritter answered: "Report has nowise told you lies; there is no saying that circulates among the people but contains in it some grain of truth. Let me tell you accurately how the matter stands. I lodge every stranger that comes beneath my roof, and divide my morsel with him, for the love of God. But I am a plain German man, of the old cut and fashion; speak as it lies about my heart, and require that my guest also should be hearty and confiding; should enjoy with me what I have, and tell frankly what he wants. Now, there is a sort of people that vex me with all manner of grimaces; that banter me with smirkings, and bows, and crouchings; put all their words to the torture; make a deal

of talk without sense or salt; think they will cozen me with smooth speeches; behave at dinner as women at a christening. If I say, 'Help yourself!' out of reverence, they pick you a fraction from the plate which I would not offer to my dog. If I say, 'Your health!' they scarcely wet their lips from the full cup, as if they set God's gifts at naught. Now, when the sorry rabble carry things too far with me, and I cannot, for the soul of me, know what they would be at, I get into a rage at last, and use my household privilege; catch the noodle by the spall, thrash him sufficiently, and pack him out of doors. This is the use and wont with me, and I do so with every guest that plagues me with these freaks. But a man of your stamp is always welcome: you told me plump out in plain German what you thought, as is the fashion with the Bremers. Call on me boldly again, if your road lead you hither. And so, God be with you."

Franz now moved on, with a joyful humour, towards Antwerp; and he wished that he might everywhere find such a reception as he had met from the Ritter Eberhard Bronkhorst. On approaching the ancient queen of the Flemish cities, the sail of his hope was swelled by a propitious breeze. Riches and superfluity met him in every street; and it seemed as if scarcity and want had been exiled from the busy town In all probability, thought he, there must be many of my father's debtors who have risen again, and will gladly make me full payment whenever I substantiate my claims. After resting for a while from his fatigues, he set about obtaining, in the inn where he was quartered, some preliminary knowledge of the situation of his debtors.

"How stands it with Peter Martens?" inquired he one day of his companions at table; "is he still living, and doing much business?"

"Peter Martens is a warm man," answered one of the party; "has a brisk commission trade, and draws good profit from it."

"Is Fabian van Plurs still in good circumstances?"

"Oh! there is no end to Fabian's wealth. He is a Councillor; his woollen manufactories are thriving incredibly."

"Has Jonathan Frischkier good custom in his trade?"

"Ah! Jonathan were now a brisk fellow, had not Kaiser Max let the French chouse him out of his Princess.[1] Jonathan had got the furnishing of the lace for the bride's dress; but the Kaiser has left poor Frischkier in the lurch, as the bride has left himself. If you have a fair one, whom you would remember with a bit of lace, he will give it you at half-price."

"Is the firm Op de Butekant still standing, or has it sunk?"

"There was a crack in the beams there some years ago, but the Spanish caravelles have put a new prop to it, and it now holds fast."

Franz inquired about several other merchants who were on his list; found that most of them, though in his father's time they had "failed," were now standing firmly on their legs; and inferred from this, that a judicious bankruptcy has, from of old, been the mine of future gains. This intelligence refreshed him mightily: he hastened to put his documents in order, and submit them to the proper parties. But with the Antwerpers, he fared as his itinerating countrymen do with shopkeepers in the German towns: they find everywhere a friendly welcome at their first appearance, but are looked upon with cheerfulness nowhere when they come collecting debts. Some would have nothing to do with these former sins; and were of opinion, that by the tender of the legal five-per-cent. composition they had been entirely abolished: it was the creditor's fault if he had not accepted payment in time. Others could not recollect any Melchior of Bremen; opened their Infallible Books; found no debtor-entry marked for this unknown name. Others, again, brought out a strong counter-reckoning; and three days had not passed till Franz was sitting in the

[1] Anne of Brittany.

Debtors' Ward, to answer for his father's credit, not to depart till he had paid the uttermost farthing.

These were not the best prospects for the young man, who had set his hope and trust upon the Antwerp patrons of his fortune, and now saw the fair soap-bubble vanish quite away. In his strait confinement, he felt himself in the condition of a soul in Purgatory, now that his skiff had run ashore and gone to pieces, in the middle of the haven where he thought to find security. Every thought of Meta was as a thorn in his heart; there was now no shadow of a possibility, that from the whirlpool which had sunk him, he could ever rise, and stretch out his hand to her; nor, suppose he should get his head above water, was it in poor Meta's power to pull him on dry land. He fell into a sullen desperation; had no wish but to die speedily, and give his woes the slip at once; and, in fact, he did attempt to kill himself by starvation. But this is a sort of death which is not at the beck of every one, so ready as the shrunk Pomponius Atticus found it, when his digestive apparatus had already struck work. A sound peptic stomach does not yield so tamely to the precepts of the head or heart After the moribund debtor had abstained two days from food, a ravenous hunger suddenly usurped the government of his will, and performed of its own authority, all the operations which, in other cases, are directed by the mind. It ordered his hand to seize the spoon, his mouth to receive the victual, his interior maxillary jaw to get in motion, and itself accomplished the usual functions of digestion, unordered. Thus did this last resolve make shipwreck, on a hard breadcrust; for, in the seven-and-twentieth year of life, it has a heroism connected with it, which in the seven-and-seventieth is entirely gone.

At bottom, it was not the object of the barbarous Antwerpers to squeeze money from the pretended debtor, but only to pay him none, as his demands were not admitted to be liquid. Whether it were, then, that the public Prayer in Bremen had in truth a little virtue, or that the supposed

creditors were not desirous of supporting a superfluous boarder for life, true it is, that after the lapse of three months Franz was delivered from his imprisonment, under the condition of leaving the city within four-and-twenty hours, and never again setting foot on the soil and territory of Antwerp. At the same time, he received five crowns for travelling expenses from the faithful hands of Justice, which had taken charge of his horse and luggage, and conscientiously balanced the produce of the same against judicial and curatory expenses.

With heavy-laden heart, in the humblest mood, with his staff in his hand, he left the rich city, into which he had ridden some time ago with high-soaring hopes. Broken down, and undetermined what to do, or rather altogether without thought, he plodded through the streets to the nearest gate, not minding whither the road into which chance conducted him might lead. He saluted no traveller, he asked for no inn, except when fatigue or hunger forced him to lift up his eyes, and look around for some church-spire, or sign of human habitation, when he needed human aid. Many days he had wandered on, as if unconsciously; and a secret instinct had still, by means of his uncrazed feet, led him right forward on the way to home; when, all at once, he awoke as from an oppressive dream, and perceived on what road he was travelling.

He halted instantly, to consider whether he should proceed or turn back. Shame and confusion took possession of his soul, when he thought of skulking about in his native town as a beggar, branded with the mark of contempt, and claiming the charitable help of his townsmen, whom of old he had eclipsed by his wealth and magnificence. And how in this form could he present himself before his fair Meta, without disgracing the choice of her heart? He did not leave his fancy time to finish this doleful picture; but wheeled about to take the other road, as hastily as if he had been standing even then at the gate of Bremen, and the ragged apprentices

had been assembling to accompany him with gibes and mockery through the streets. His purpose was formed: he would make for the nearest seaport in the Netherlands; engage as sailor in a Spanish ship, to work his passage to the new world; and not return to his country, till in the Peruvian land of gold he should have regained the wealth, which he had squandered so heedlessly, before he knew the worth of money. In the shaping of this new plan, it is true, the fair Meta fell so far into the background, that even to the sharpest prophetic eye she could only hover as a faint shadow in the distance; yet the wandering projector pleased himself with thinking that she was again interwoven with the scheme of his life; and he took large steps, as if by this rapidity he meant to reach her so much the sooner.

Already he was on the Flemish soil once more; and found himself at sunset not far from Rheinberg, in a little hamlet, Rummelsburg by name, which has since, in the Thirty-Years War, been utterly destroyed. A caravan of carriers from Lyke had already filled the inn, so that Mine Host had no room left, and referred him to the next town; the rather that he did not draw too flattering a presage from his present vagabond physiognomy, and held him to be a thieves' purveyor, who had views upon the Lyke carriers. He was forced, notwithstanding his excessive weariness, to gird himself for march, and again to take his bundle on his back.

As in retiring, he was muttering between his teeth some bitter complaints and curses of the Landlord's hardness of heart, the latter seemed to take some pity on the forlorn wayfarer, and called after him, from the door: "Stay, neighbour, let me speak to you: if you wish to rest here, I can accommodate you after all. In that Castle there are empty rooms enow, if they be not too lonely; it is not inhabited, and I have got the keys." Franz accepted the proposal with joy, praised it as a deed of mercy, and requested only shelter and a supper, were it in a castle or a

cottage. Mine Host, however, was privily a rogue, whom it had galled to hear the stranger drop some half-audible contumelies against him, and meant to be avenged on him, by a Hobgoblin that inhabited the old fortress, and had many long years before expelled the owners.

The Castle lay hard by the hamlet, on a steep rock, right opposite the inn, from which it was divided merely by the highway, and a little gurgling brook. The situation being so agreeable, the edifice was still kept in repair, and well provided with all sorts of house-gear; for it served the owner as a hunting-lodge, where he frequently caroused all day; and so soon as the stars began to twinkle in the sky, retired with his whole retinue, to escape the mischief of the Ghost, who rioted about in it the whole night over, but by day gave no disturbance. Unpleasant as the owner felt this spoiling of his mansion by a bugbear, the nocturnal sprite was not without advantages, for the great security it gave from thieves The Count could have appointed no trustier or more watchful keeper over the Castle, than this same Spectre, for the rashest troop of robbers never ventured to approach its station. Accordingly he knew of no safer place for laying up his valuables, than this old tower, in the hamlet of Rummelsburg, near Rheinberg.

The sunshine had sunk, the dark night was coming heavily on, when Franz, with a lantern in his hand, proceeded to the castle-gate, under the guidance of Mine Host, who carried in his hand a basket of victuals, with a flask of wine, which he said should not be marked against him He had also taken along with him a pair of candlesticks, and two wax-lights; for in the whole Castle there was neither lamp nor taper, as no one ever stayed in it after twilight. In the way, Franz noticed the creaking heavy-laden basket, and the wax-lights, which he thought he should not need, and yet must pay for. Therefore he said: "What is this superfluity and waste, as at a banquet? The light in the lantern is enough to see with, till I go to bed; and when I awake,

the sun will be high enough, for I am tired completely, and shall sleep with both eyes."

"I will not hide from you," replied the Landlord, "that a story runs of there being mischief in the Castle, and a Goblin that frequents it. You, however, need not let the thing disturb you; we are near enough, you see, for you to call us, should you meet with aught unnatural; I and my folks will be at your hand in a twinkling, to assist you. Down in the house there we keep astir all night through, some one is always moving. I have lived here these thirty years; yet I cannot say that I have ever seen aught. If there be now and then a little hurly-burlying at nights, it is nothing but cats and martins rummaging about the granary. As a precaution, I have provided you with candles: the night is no friend of man; and the tapers are consecrated, so that sprites, if there be such in the Castle, will avoid their shine."

It was no lying in Mine Host to say that he had never seen anything of spectres in the Castle; for by night he had taken special care not once to set foot in it; and by day the Goblin did not come to sight. In the present case, too, the traitor would not risk himself across the border. After opening the door, he handed Franz the basket, directed him what way to go, and wished him good-night. Franz entered the lobby without anxiety or fear; believing the ghost-story to be empty tattle, or a distorted tradition of some real occurrence in the place, which idle fancy had shaped into an unnatural adventure. He remembered the stout Ritter Eberhard Bronkhorst, from whose heavy arm he had apprehended such maltreatment, and with whom, notwithstanding, he had found so hospitable a reception. On this ground he had laid it down as a rule deduced from his travelling experiences, when he heard any common rumour, to believe exactly the reverse, and left the grain of truth, which, in the opinion of the wise Knight, always lies in such reports, entirely out of sight.

Pursuant to Mine Host's direction, he ascended the wind-

ing stone stair; and reached a bolted door, which he opened with his key. A long dark gallery, where his footsteps resounded, led him into a large hall, and from this, a side-door, into a suite of apartments, richly provided with all furniture for decoration or convenience. Out of these he chose the room which had the friendliest aspect, where he found a well-pillowed bed; and from the window could look right down upon the inn, and catch every loud word that was spoken there. He lit his wax-tapers, furnished his table, and feasted with the commodiousness and relish of an Otaheitean noble. The big-bellied flask was an antidote to thirst. So long as his teeth were in full occupation, he had no time to think of the reported devilry in the Castle. If aught now and then made a stir in the distance, and Fear called to him, "Hark! hark! there comes the Goblin"; Courage answered: "Stuff! it is cats and martins bickering and caterwauling." But in the digestive half-hour after meat, when the sixth sense, that of hunger and thirst, no longer occupied the soul, she directed her attention from the other five exclusively upon the sense of hearing; and already Fear was whispering three timid thoughts into the listener's ear, before Courage had time to answer once.

As the first resource, he locked the door, and bolted it; made his retreat to the walled seat in the vault of the window. He opened this, and to dissipate his thoughts a little, looked out on the spangled sky, gazed at the corroded moon, and counted how often the stars snuffed themselves. On the road beneath him all was void; and in spite of the pretended nightly bustle in the inn, the doors were shut, the lights out, and everything as still as in a sepulchre. On the other hand, the watchman blew his horn, making his "List, gentlemen!" sound over all the hamlet; and for the composure of the timorous astronomer, who still kept feasting his eyes on the splendour of the stars, uplifted a rusty evening-hymn right under his window; so that Franz might easily have carried on a conversation with him, which,

for the sake of company, he would willingly have done, had he in the least expected that the watchman would make answer to him.

In a populous city, in the middle of a numerous household, where there is a hubbub equal to that of a bee-hive, it may form a pleasant entertainment for the thinker to philosophise on Solitude, to decorate her as the loveliest playmate of the human spirit, to view her under all her advantageous aspects, and long for her enjoyment as for hidden treasure. But in scenes where she is no exotic, in the isle of Juan Fernandez, where a solitary eremite, escaped from shipwreck, lives with her through long years; or in the dreary night-time, in a deep wood, or in an old uninhabited castle, where empty walls and vaults awaken horror, and nothing breathes of life, but the moping owl in the ruinous turret; there, in good sooth, she is not the most agreeable companion for the timid anchorite that has to pass his time in her abode, especially if he is every moment looking for the entrance of a spectre to augment the party. In such a case it may easily chance that a window conversation with the watchman shall afford a richer entertainment for the spirit and the heart, than a reading of the most attractive eulogy on solitude. If Ritter Zimmermann had been in Franz's place, in the castle of Rummelsburg, on the Westphalian marches, he would doubtless in this position have struck out the fundamental topics of as interesting a treatise on *Society*, as, inspired to all appearance by the irksomeness of some ceremonious assembly, he has poured out from the fullness of his heart in praise of *Solitude*.

Midnight is the hour at which the world of spirits acquires activity and life, when hebetated animal nature lies entombed in deep slumber. Franz inclined getting through this critical hour in sleep rather than awake; so he closed his window, went the rounds of his room once more, spying every nook and crevice, to see whether all was safe and earthly; snuffed the lights to make them burn clearer; and

without undressing or delaying, threw himself upon his bed, with which his wearied person felt unusual satisfaction. Yet he could not get asleep so fast as he wished. A slight palpitation at the heart, which he ascribed to a tumult in the blood, arising from the sultriness of the day, kept him waking for a while; and he failed not to employ this respite in offering up such a pithy evening prayer as he had not prayed for many years. This produced the usual effect, that he softly fell asleep while saying it.

After about an hour, as he supposed, he started up with a sudden terror; a thing not at all surprising when there is tumult in the blood. He was broad awake: he listened whether all was quiet, and heard nothing but the clock strike twelve; a piece of news which the watchman forthwith communicated to the hamlet in doleful recitative. Franz listened for a while, turned on the other side, and was again about to sleep, when he caught, as it were, the sound of a door grating in the distance, and immediately it shut with a stifled bang. "Awake! awake!" bawled Fright into his ear: "this is the Ghost in very deed!"—"'Tis nothing but the wind," said Courage manfully. But quickly it came nearer, nearer, like the sound of heavy footsteps. Clink here, clink there, as if a criminal were rattling his irons, or as if the porter were walking about the Castle with his bunch of keys. Alas, here was no wind business! Courage held his peace; and quaking Fear drove all the blood to the heart, and made it thump like a smith's forge-hammer.

The thing was now beyond jesting. If Fear would still have let Courage get a word, the latter would have put the terror-struck watcher in mind of his subsidiary treaty with Mine Host, and incited him to claim the stipulated assistance loudly from the window; but for this there was a want of proper resolution. The quaking Franz had recourse to the bed-clothes, the last fortress of the timorous, and drew them close over his ears, as Bird Ostrich sticks his head in the grass, when he can no longer escape the huntsman. Outside

it came along, door up, door to, with hideous uproar; and at last it reached the bed-room. It jerked sharply at the lock, tried several keys till it found the right one; yet the bar still held the door, till a bounce like a thunder-clap made bolt and rivet start, and threw it wide open. Now stalked in a long lean man, with a black beard, in ancient garb, and with a gloomy countenance, his eyebrows hanging down in deep earnestness from his brow. Over his right shoulder he had a scarlet cloak; and on his head he wore a peaked hat. With a heavy step he walked thrice in silence up and down the chamber; looked at the consecrated tapers, and snuffed them that they might burn brighter. Then he threw aside his cloak, girded on a scissor-pouch which he had under it, produced a set of shaving-tackle, and immediately began to whet a sharp razor on the broad strap which he wore at his girdle.

Franz perspired in mortal agony under his coverlet; recommended himself to the keeping of the Virgin; and anxiously speculated on the object of this manœuvre, not knowing whether it was meant for his throat or his beard. To his comfort, the Goblin poured some water from a silver flask into a basin of silver, and with his skinny hand lathered the soap into light foam; then set a chair, and beckoned with a solemn look to the quaking looker-on to come forth from his recess.

Against so pertinent a sign, remonstrance was as bootless as it is against the rigorous commands of the Grand Turk, when he transmits an exiled vizier to the Angel of Death, the Capichi Bashi with the Silken Cord, to take delivery of his head. The most rational procedure that can be adopted in this critical case, is to comply with necessity, put a good face on a bad business, and with stoical composure let one's throat be noosed. Franz honoured the Spectre's order; the coverlet began to move, he sprang sharply from his couch, and took the place pointed out to him on the seat. However strange this quick transition from the uttermost

terror to the boldest resolution may appear, I doubt not but Moritz in his *Psychological Journal* could explain the matter till it seemed quite natural.

Immediately the Goblin Barber tied the towel about his shivering customer; seized the comb and scissors, and clipped off his hair and beard. Then he soaped him scientifically, first the beard, next the eyebrows, at last the temples and the hind-head; and shaved him from throat to nape as smooth and bald as a Death's-head. This operation finished, he washed his head, dried it clean, made his bow, and buttoned-up his scissor-pouch; wrapped himself in his scarlet mantle, and made for departing. The consecrated tapers had burnt with an exquisite brightness through the whole transaction; and Franz, by the light of them, perceived in the mirror that the shaver had changed him into a Chinese pagoda. In secret he heartily deplored the loss of his fair brown locks; yet now took fresh breath, as he observed that with this sacrifice the account was settled, and the Ghost had no more power over him.

So it was in fact; Redcloak went towards the door, silently as he had entered, without salutation or good-bye; and seemed entirely the contrast of his talkative guild-brethren. But scarcely was he gone three steps, when he paused, looked round with a mournful expression at his well-served customer, and stroked the flat of his hand over his black bushy beard. He did the same a second time; and again just as he was in the act of stepping out at the door, a thought struck Franz that the Spectre wanted something; and a rapid combination of ideas suggested, that perhaps he was expecting the very service he himself had just performed.

As the Ghost, notwithstanding his rueful look, seemed more disposed for banter than for seriousness, and had played his guest a scurvy trick, not done him any real injury, the panic of the latter had now almost subsided. So he ventured the experiment, and beckoned to the Ghost to take the seat from which he had himself just risen. The

Goblin instantly obeyed, threw off his cloak, laid his barber' tackle on the table, and placed himself in the chair, in the posture of a man that wishes to be shaved. Franz carefully observed the same procedure which the Spectre had observed to him, clipped his beard with the scissors, cropt away his hair, lathered his whole scalp, and the Ghost all the while sat steady as a wig-block. The awkward journeyman came ill at handling the razor: he had never had another in his hand; and he shore the beard right against the hair; whereat the Goblin made as strange grimaces as Erasmus's Ape, when imitating its master's shaving. Nor was the unpractised bungler himself well at ease, and he thought more than once of the sage aphorism, *What is not thy trade make not thy business;* yet he struggled through the task, the best way he could, and scraped the Ghost as bald as he himself was.

Hitherto the scene between the Spectre and the traveller had been played pantomimically; the action now became dramatic. "Stranger," said the Ghost, "accept my thanks for the service thou hast done me. By thee I am delivered from the long imprisonment, which has chained me for three hundred years within these walls; to which my departed soul was doomed, till a mortal hand should consent to retaliate on me what I practised on others in my lifetime.

"Know that of old a reckless scorner dwelt within this tower, who took his sport on priests as well as laics. Count Hardman, such his name, was no philanthropist, acknowledged no superior and no law, but practised vain caprice and waggery, regarding not the sacredness of hospitable rights: the wanderer who came beneath his roof, the needy man who asked a charitable alms of him, he never sent away unvisited by wicked joke. I was his Castle Barber, still a willing instrument, and did whatever pleased him. Many a pious pilgrim, journeying past us, I allured with friendly speeches to the hall; prepared the bath for him, and when he thought to take good comfort, shaved him smooth and

bald, and packed him out of doors. Then would Count Hardman, looking from the window, see with pleasure how the foxes' whelps of children gathered from the hamlet to assail the outcast, and to cry as once their fellows to Elisha: 'Baldhead! Baldhead!' In this the scoffer took his pleasure, laughing with a devilish joy, till he would hold his pot-paunch, and his eyes ran down with water.

"Once came a saintly man, from foreign lands; he carried, like a penitent, a heavy cross upon his shoulder, and had stamped five nail-marks on his hands, and feet, and side; upon his head there was a ring of hair like to the Crown of Thorns. He called upon us here, requesting water for his feet, and a small crust of bread. Immediately I took him to the bath, to serve him in my common way; respected not the sacred ring, but shore it clean from off him. Then the pious pilgrim spoke a heavy malison upon he: 'Know, accursed man, that when thou diest, Heaven, and Hell, and Purgatory's iron gate, are shut against thy soul. As goblin it shall rage within these walls, till unrequired, unbid, a traveller come and exercise retaliation on thee.'

"That hour I sickened, and the marrow in my bones dried up; I faded like a shadow. My spirit left the wasted carcass, and was exiled to this Castle, as the saint had doomed it. In vain I struggled for deliverance from the torturing bonds that fettered me to Earth; for thou must know, that when the soul forsakes her clay, she panteth for her place of rest, and this sick longing spins her years to æons, while in foreign element she languishes for home. Now self-tormenting, I pursued the mournful occupation I had followed in my lifetime. Alas! my uproar soon made desolate this house! But seldom came a pilgrim here to lodge. And though I treated all like thee, no one would understand me, and perform, as thou, the service which has freed my soul from bondage. Henceforth shall no hob-goblin wander in this Castle; I return to my long-wished-for

rest. And now, young stranger, once again my thanks, that thou hast loosed me! Were I keeper of deep-hidden treasures, they were thine; but wealth in life was not my lot, nor in this Castle lies there any cash entombed. Yet mark my counsel. Tarry here till beard and locks again shall cover chin and scalp; then turn thee homewards to thy native town; and on the Weser-bridge of Bremen, at the time when day and night in Autumn are alike, wait for a Friend, who there will meet thee, who will tell thee what to do, that it be well with thee on Earth. If from the golden horn of plenty, blessing and abundance flow to thee, then think of me; and ever as the day thou freedst me from the curse comes round, cause for my soul's repose three masses to be said. Now fare thee well. I go, no more returning." [1]

With these words the Ghost, having by his copiousness of talk satisfactorily attested his former existence as court-barber in the Castle of Rummelsburg, vanished into air, and left his deliverer full of wonder at the strange adventure. He stood for a long while motionless; in doubt whether the whole matter had actually happened, or an unquiet dream had deluded his senses; but his bald head convinced him that here had been a real occurrence. He returned to bed, and slept, after the fright he had undergone, till the hour of noon. The treacherous Landlord had been watching since morning, when the traveller with the scalp was to come forth, that he might receive him with gibing speeches under pretext of astonishment at his nocturnal adventure. But as the stranger loitered too long, and mid-day was approaching, the affair became serious; and Mine Host began to dread that the Goblin might have treated his guest a little harshly, have beaten him to a jelly perhaps, or so frightened him that he had died of terror; and to carry his wanton revenge

[1] I know not whether the reader has observed that our Author makes the Spectre speak in *iambics*; a whim which here and there comes over him in other tales also —WIELAND.

to such a length as this had not been his intention. He therefore rang his people together, hastened out with man and maid to the tower, and reached the door of the apartment where he had observed the light on the previous evening. He found an unknown key in the lock; but the door was barred within; for after the disappearance of the Goblin, Franz had again secured it. He knocked with a perturbed violence, till the Seven Sleepers themselves would have awoke at the din. Franz started up, and thought in his first confusion that the Ghost was again standing at the door, to favour him with another call. But hearing Mine Host's voice, who required nothing more but that his guest would give some sign of life, he gathered himself up and opened the room.

With seeming horror at the sight of him, Mine Host, striking his hands together, exclaimed: "By Heaven and all the saints! Redcloak" (by this name the Ghost was known among them) "*has* been here, and has shaved you bald as a block! Now, it is clear as day that the old story is no fable. But tell me how looked the Goblin · what did he say to you? what did he do?"

Franz, who had now seen through the questioner, made answer: "The Goblin looked like a man in a red cloak; what he did is not hidden from you, and what he said I will remember: 'Stranger,' said he, 'trust no innkeeper who is a Turk in grain. What would befall thee here he knew. Be wise and happy. I withdraw from this my ancient dwelling, for my time is run. Henceforth no goblin riots here; I now become a silent Incubus, to plague the Landlord; nip him, tweak him, harass him, unless the Turk do expiate his sin; do freely give thee prog and lodging till brown locks again shall cluster round thy head.'" [1]

The Landlord shuddered at these words, cut a large cross in the air before him, vowed by the Holy Virgin to give the

[1] Here too, on the Spectre's score Franz makes extempore *iambics*.—WIELAND.

traveller free board so long as he liked to continue, led him over to his house, and treated him with the best. By this adventure, Franz had well-nigh got the reputation of a conjuror, as the spirit thenceforth never once showed face. He often passed the night in the tower; and a desperado of the village once kept him company, without having beard or scalp disturbed. The owner of the place, having learned that Redcloak no longer walked in Rummelsburg, was, of course, delighted at the news, and ordered that the stranger, who, as he supposed, had laid him, should be well taken care of.

By the time when the clusters were beginning to be coloured on the vine, and the advancing autumn reddened the apples, Franz's brown locks were again curling over his temples, and he girded up his knapsack; for all his thoughts and meditations were turned upon the Weser-bridge, to seek the Friend, who, at the behest of the Goblin Barber, was to direct him how to make his fortune. When about taking leave of Mine Host, that charitable person led from his stable a horse well saddled and equipt, which the owner of the Castle had presented to the stranger, for having made his house again habitable; nor had the Count forgot to send a sufficient purse along with it, to bear its travelling charges; and so Franz came riding back into his native city, brisk and light of heart, as he had ridden out of it twelve months ago. He sought out his old quarters in the alley, but kept himself quite still and retired; only inquiring underhand how matters stood with the fair Meta, whether she was still alive and unwedded. To this inquiry he received a satisfactory answer, and contented himself with it in the meanwhile; for, till his fate were decided, he would not risk appearing in her sight, or making known to her his arrival in Bremen.

With unspeakable longing, he waited the equinox; his impatience made every intervening day a year. At last the long-wished-for term appeared. The night before, he could

not close an eye, for thinking of the wonders that were coming. The blood was whirling and beating in his arteries, as it had done at the Castle of Rummelsburg, when he lay in expectation of his spectre visitant. To be sure of not missing his expected Friend, he rose by daybreak, and proceeded with the earliest dawn to the Weser-bridge, which as yet stood empty and untrod by passengers. He walked along it several times in solitude, with that presentiment of coming gladness, which includes in it the real enjoyment of all terrestrial felicity; for it is not the attainment of our wishes, but the undoubted hope of attaining them, which offers to the human soul the full measure of highest and most heartfelt satisfaction. He formed many projects as to how he should present himself to his beloved Meta, when his looked-for happiness should have arrived; whether it would be better to appear before her in full splendour, or to mount from his former darkness with the first gleam of morning radiance, and discover to her by degrees the change in his condition. Curiosity, moreover, put a thousand questions to Reason in regard to the adventure. Who can the Friend be that is to meet me on the Weser-bridge? Will it be one of my old acquaintances, by whom, since my ruin, I have been entirely forgotten? How will he pave the way to me for happiness? And will this way be short or long, easy or toilsome? To the whole of which Reason, in spite of all her thinking and speculating, answered not a word.

In about an hour, the Bridge began to get awake; there was riding, driving, walking to and fro on it; and much commercial ware passing this way and that. The usual day-guard of beggars and importunate persons also by degrees took up this post, so favourable for their trade, to levy contributions on the public benevolence; for of poor-houses and work-houses, the wisdom of the legislature had as yet formed no scheme. The first of the tattered cohort that applied for alms to the jovial promenader, from whose eyes gay hope

laughed forth, was a discharged soldier, provided with the military badge of a timber leg, which had been lent him, seeing he had fought so stoutly in former days for his native country, as the recompense of his valour, with the privilege of begging where he pleased; and who now, in the capacity of physiognomist, pursued the study of man upon the Weser-bridge, with such success, that he very seldom failed in his attempts for charity. Nor did his exploratory glance in anywise mislead him in the present instance; for Franz, in the joy of his heart, threw a white engel-groschen into the cripple's hat.

During the morning hours, when none but the laborious artisan is busy, and the more exalted townsman still lies in sluggish rest, he scarcely looked for his promised Friend; he expected him in the higher classes, and took little notice of the present passengers. About the council-hour, however, when the Proceres of Bremen were driving past to the hall, in their gorgeous robes of office, and about exchange-time, he was all eye and ear; he spied the passengers from afar; and when a right man came along the bridge, his blood began to flutter, and he thought here was the creator of his fortune. Meanwhile hour after hour passed on; the sun rose high; ere long the noontide brought a pause in business; the rushing crowd faded away; and still the expected Friend appeared not. Franz now walked up and down the Bridge quite alone; had no society in view but the beggars, who were serving out their cold collations, without moving from the place. He made no scruple to do the same; and, not being furnished with provisions, he purchased some fruit, and took his dinner *inter ambulandum.*

The whole club that was dining on the Bridge had remarked the young man, watching here from early morning till noon, without addressing any one, or doing any sort of business. They held him to be a lounger; and though all of them had tasted his bounty, he did not escape their critical remarks. In jest they had named him the Bridge-

bailiff. The physiognomist with the timber-toe, however, noticed that his countenance was not now so gay as in the morning; he appeared to be reflecting earnestly on something; he had drawn his hat close over his face; his movement was slow and thoughtful; he had nibbled at an apple-rind for some time, without seeming to be conscious that he was doing so. From this appearance of affairs, the man-spier thought he might extract some profit; therefore he put his wooden and his living leg in motion, and stilted off to the other end of the Bridge, and lay in wait for the thinker, that he might assail him, under the appearance of a new arrival, for a fresh alms. This invention prospered to the full: the musing philosopher gave no heed to the mendicant, put his hand into his pocket mechanically, and threw a six-groat piece into the fellow's hat, to be rid of him.

In the afternoon, a thousand new faces once more came abroad. The watcher was now tired of his unknown Friend's delaying, yet hope still kept his attention on the stretch. He stept into the view of every passenger, hoped that one of them would clasp him in his arms, but all proceeded coldly on their way; the most did not observe him at all, and few returned his salute with a slight nod. The sun was already verging to decline, the shadows were becoming longer, the crowd upon the Bridge diminished; and the beggar-piquet by degrees drew back into their barracks in the Mattenburg. A deep sadness sank upon the hopeless Franz, when he saw his expectation mocked, and the lordly prospect which had lain before him in the morning vanish from his eyes at evening. He fell into a sort of sulky desperation; was on the point of springing over the parapet, and dashing himself down from the Bridge into the river. But the thought of Meta kept him back, and induced him to postpone his purpose till he had seen her yet once more. He resolved to watch next day when she should go to church, for the last time to drink delight

from her looks, and then forthwith to still his warm love forever in the cold stream of the Weser.

While about to leave the Bridge, he was met by the invalided pikeman with the wooden leg, who, for pastime, had been making many speculations as to what could be the young man's object, that had made him watch upon the Bridge from dawn to darkness. He himself had lingered beyond his usual time, that he might wait him out; but as the matter hung too long upon the pegs, curiosity incited him to turn to the youth himself, and question him respecting it.

"No offence, young gentleman," said he: "allow me to ask you a question."

Franz, who was not in a very talking humour, and was now meeting, from the mouth of a cripple, the address which he had looked for with such longing from a friend, answered rather testily: "Well, then, what is it? Speak, old graybeard!"

"We two," said the other, "were the first upon the Bridge to-day, and now, you see, we are the last. As to me and others of my kidney, it is our vocation brings us hither, our trade of alms-gathering, but for you, in sooth you are not of our guild; yet you have watched here the whole blessed day. Now I pray you, tell me, if it is not a secret, what it is that brings you hither; or what stone is lying on your heart, that you wished to roll away."

"What good were it to thee, old blade," said Franz bitterly, "to know where the shoe pinches me, or what concern is lying on my heart? It will give thee small care."

"Sir, I have a kind wish towards you, because you opened your hand to me, and twice gave me alms, for which God reward you; but your countenance at night was not so cheerful as in the morning, and that grieves my heart."

The kindly sympathy of this old warrior pleased the misanthrope, so that he willingly pursued the conversation.

"Why, then," answered he, "if thou wouldst know what

has made me battle here all day with tedium, thou must understand that I was waiting for a Friend, who appointed me hither, and now leaves me to expect in vain."

"Under favour," answered Timbertoe, "if I might speak my mind, this Friend of yours, be who he like, is little better than a rogue to lead you such a dance. If he treated *me* so, by my faith, his crown should get acquainted with my crutch next time we met. If he could not keep his word, he should have let you know, and not bamboozled you as if you were a child."

"Yet I cannot altogether blame this Friend," said Franz, "for being absent; he did not promise; it was but a dream that told me I should meet him here."

The goblin-tale was too long for him to tell, so he veiled it under cover of a dream.

"Ah! that is another story," said the beggar, "if you build on dreams, it is little wonder that your hope deceives you. I myself have dreamed much foolish stuff in my time; but I was never such a madman as to heed it. Had I all the treasures that have been allotted to me in dreams, I might buy the city of Bremen, were it sold by auction. But I never credited a jot of them, or stirred hand or foot to prove their worth or worthlessness: I knew well it would be lost. Ha! I must really laugh in your face, to think that on the order of an empty dream, you have squandered a fair day of your life, which you might have spent better at a merry banquet."

"The issue shows that thou art right, old man, and that dreams many times deceive. But," continued Franz, defensively, "I dreamed so vividly and circumstantially, above three months ago, that on this very day, in this very place, I should meet a Friend, who would tell me things of the deepest importance, that it was well worth while to go and see if it would come to pass."

"O, as for vividness," said Timbertoe, "no man can dream more vividly than I. There is one dream I had,

which I shall never in my life forget. I dreamed, who knows how many years ago, that my Guardian Angel stood before my bed in the figure of a youth, with golden hair, and two silver wings on his back, and said to me: 'Berthold, listen to the words of my mouth, that none of them be lost from thy heart. There is a treasure appointed thee, which thou shalt dig, to comfort thy heart withal for the remaining days of thy life. To-morrow, about evening, when the sun is going down, take spade and shovel on thy shoulder; go forth from the Mattenburg on the right, across the Tieber, by the Balkenbrucke, past the Cloister of St. John's, and on to the Great Roland.[1] Then take thy way over the Court of the Cathedral through the Schusselkorb, till thou arrive without the city at a garden, which has this mark, that a stair of three stone steps leads down from the highway to its gate Wait by a side, in secret, till the sickle of the moon shall shine on thee, then push with the strength of a man against the weak-barred gate, which will resist thee little. Enter boldly into the garden, and turn thee to the vine-trellises which overhang the covered-walk; behind this, on the left, a tall apple-tree overtops the lowly shrubs. Go to the trunk of this tree, thy face turned right against the moon: look three ells before thee on the ground, thou shalt see two cinnamon-rose bushes; there strike in, and dig three spans deep, till thou find a stone plate; under this lies the treasure, buried in an iron chest, full of money and money's worth. Though the chest be heavy and clumsy, avoid not the labour of lifting it from its bed; it will reward thy trouble well, if thou seek the key which lies hid beneath it.'"

In astonishment at what he heard, Franz stared and gazed

[1] The rude figure of a man in armour, usually erected in the public square or market-place of old German towns, is called the *Rolandsaule*, or *Rurlandsaule*, from its supposed reference to Roland, the famous peer of Charlemagne The proper and ancient name, it seems, is *Rugelandsaule*, or Pillar of Judgment; and the stone indicated, of old, that the town possessed an independent jurisdiction —ED.

upon the dreamer, and could not have concealed his amazement, had not the dusk of night been on his side. By every mark in the description, he had recognised his own garden, left him by his father. It had been the good man's hobby in his life; but on this account had little pleased his son; according to the rule that son and father seldom sympathise in their favourite pursuit, unless indeed it be a vice, in which case, as the adage runs, the apple often falls at no great distance from the trunk. Father Melchior had himself laid out this garden, altogether to his own taste in a style as wonderful and varied as that of his great-great-grandson, who has immortalised his paradise by an original description in *Hirschfeld's Garden-Calendar*. He had not, it is true, set up in it any painted menagerie for the deception of the eye; but he kept a very large one, notwithstanding, of springing-horses, winged-lions, eagles, griffins, unicorns and other wondrous beasts, all stamped on pure gold, which he carefully concealed from *every* eye, and had hid in their iron case beneath the ground. This paternal Tempe the wasteful son, in the days of his extravagance, had sold for an old song.

To Franz, the pikeman had at once become extremely interesting, as he perceived that this was the very Friend, to whom the Goblin in the Castle of Rummelsburg had consigned him. Gladly could he have embraced the veteran, and in the first rapture called him friend and father: but he restrained himself, and found it more advisable to keep his thoughts about this piece of news to himself. So he said: "Well, this is what I call a circumstantial dream. But what didst thou do, old master, in the morning, on awakening? Didst thou not follow whither thy Guardian Angel beckoned thee?"

"Pooh," said the dreamer, "why should I toil, and have my labour for my pains? It was nothing, after all, but a mere dream. If my Guardian Angel had a fancy for appearing to me, I have had enow of sleepless nights in my time,

when he might have found me waking. But he takes little charge of me, I think, else I should not, to his shame, be going hitching here on a wooden leg."

Franz took out the last piece of silver he had on him; "There," said he, "old Father, take this other gift from me, to get thee a pint of wine for evening-cup: thy talk has scared away my ill humour. Neglect not diligently to frequent this Bridge; we shall see each other here, I hope, again."

The lame old man had not gathered so rich a stock of alms for many a day, as he was now possessed of; he blessed his benefactor for his kindness, hopping away into a drinking-shop, to do himself a good turn; while Franz, enlivened with new hope, hastened off to his lodging in the alley.

Next day he got in readiness everything that is required for treasure-digging. The unessential equipments, conjurations, magic formulas, magic girdles, hieroglyphic characters, and suchlike, were entirely wanting; but these are not indispensable, provided there be no failure in the three main requisites: shovel, spade, and, before all, a treasure underground. The necessary implements he carried to the place a little before sunset, and hid them for the meanwhile in a hedge; and as to the treasure itself, he had the firm conviction that the Goblin in the Castle, and the Friend on the Bridge, would prove no liars to him. With longing impatience he expected the rising of the moon; and no sooner did she stretch her silver horns over the bushes, than he briskly set to work; observing exactly everything the Invalid had taught him; and happily accomplished the raising of the treasure, without meeting any adventure in the process, without any black dog having frightened him, or any bluish flame having lighted him to the spot.

Father Melchior, in providently burying this penny for a rainy day, had nowise meant that his son should be deprived of so considerable a part of his inheritance. The mistake lay in this, that Death had escorted the testator out of the

world in another way than said testator had expected. He had been completely convinced, that he should take his journey, old and full of days, after regulating his temporal concerns with all the formalities of an ordinary sick-bed; for so it had been prophesied to him in his youth. In consequence he purposed, when, according to the usage of the Church, extreme unction should have been dispensed to him, to call his beloved son to his bed-side, having previously dismissed all bystanders; there to give him the paternal blessing, and by way of farewell memorial direct him to this treasure buried in the garden. All this, too, would have happened in just order, if the light of the good old man had departed, like that of a wick whose oil is done; but as Death had privily snuffed him out at a feast, he undesignedly took along with him his Mammon secret to the grave; and almost as many fortunate concurrences were required before the secreted patrimony could arrive at the proper heir, as if it had been forwarded to its address by the hand of Justice itself.

With immeasurable joy the treasure-digger took possession of the shapeless Spanish pieces, which, with a vast multitude of other finer coins, the iron chest had faithfully preserved. When the first intoxication of delight had in some degree evaporated, he bethought him how the treasure was to be transported, safe and unobserved, into the narrow alley. The burden was too heavy to be carried without help; thus, with the possession of riches, all the cares attendant on them were awakened. The new Crœsus found no better plan, than to intrust his capital to the hollow trunk of a tree that stood behind the garden, in a meadow: the empty chest he again buried under the rose-bush, and smoothed the place as well as possible. In the space of three days, the treasure had been faithfully transmitted by instalments from the hollow tree into the narrow alley; and now the owner of it thought he might with honour lay aside his strict incognito. He dressed himself with the finest; had his Prayer displaced

from the church; and required, instead of it, "a Christian Thanksgiving for a Traveller, on returning to his native town, after happily arranging his affairs." He hid himself in a corner of the church, where he could observe the fair Meta, without himself being seen; he turned not his eye from the maiden, and drank from her looks the actual rapture, which in foretaste had restrained him from the break-neck somerset on the Bridge of the Weser. When the Thanksgiving came in hand, a glad sympathy shone forth from all her features, and the cheeks of the virgin glowed with joy. The customary greeting on the way homewards was so full of emphasis, that even to the third party who had noticed them, it would have been intelligible.

Franz now appeared once more on the Exchange; began a branch of trade which in a few weeks extended to the great scale; and as his wealth became daily more apparent, Neighbour Grudge, the scandal-chewer, was obliged to conclude, that in the cashing of his old debts, he must have had more luck than sense. He hired a large house, fronting the Roland, in the Market-place; engaged clerks and warehousemen, and carried on his trade unweariedly. Now the sorrowful populace of parasites again diligently handled the knocker of his door; appeared in crowds, and suffocated him with assurances of friendship, and joy-wishings on his fresh prosperity; imagined they should once more catch him in their robber claws. But experience had taught him wisdom; he paid them in their own coin, feasted their false friendship on smooth words, and dismissed them with fasting stomachs; which sovereign means for scaring off the cumbersome brood of pickthanks and toad-eaters produced the intended effect, that they betook them elsewhither.

In Bremen, the remounting Melcherson had become the story of the day; the fortune which in some inexplicable manner he had realised, as was supposed, in foreign parts, was the subject-matter of all conversations at formal dinners, in the Courts of Justice and at the Exchange. But in pro-

portion as the fame of his fortune and affluence increased, the contentedness and peace of mind of the fair Meta diminished. The friend *in petto* was now, in her opinion, well qualified to speak a plain word. Yet still his Love continued Dumb; and except the greeting on the way from church, he gave no tidings of himself. Even this sort of visit was becoming rarer, and such aspects were the sign not of warm, but of cold weather in the atmosphere of Love. Jealousy,[1] the baleful Harpy, fluttered round her little room by night, and when sleep was closing her blue eyes, croaked many a dolorous presage into the ear of the re-awakened Meta. "Forego the flattering hope of binding an inconstant heart, which, like a feather, is the sport of every wind. He loved thee, and was faithful to thee, while his lot was as thy own: like only draws to like. Now a propitious destiny exalts the Changeful far above thee. Ah! now he scorns the truest thoughts in mean apparel, now that pomp, and wealth, and splendour dazzle him once more; and courts who knows what haughty fair one that disdained him when he lay among the pots, and now with siren call allures him back to her. Perhaps her cozening voice has turned him from thee, speaking with false words: 'For thee, God's garden blossoms in thy native town: friend, thou hast now thy choice of all our maidens; choose with prudence, not by the eye alone. Of girls are many, and of fathers many, who in secret lie in wait for thee; none will withhold his darling daughter. Take happiness and honour with the fairest; likewise birth and fortune. The councillor dignity awaits thee, where vote of friends is potent in the city.'"

These suggestions of Jealousy disturbed and tormented her heart without ceasing: she reviewed her fair contemporaries in Bremen, estimated the ratio of so many splendid matches to herself and her circumstances; and the result was far

[1] Jealousy too (at bottom a very sad spectre, but not here introduced as one) now *croaks* in iambics, as the Goblin Barber lately spoke in them.—WIELAND.

from favourable. The first tidings of her lover's change of situation had in secret charmed her; not in the selfish view of becoming participatress in a large fortune; but for her mother's sake, who had abdicated all hopes of earthly happiness, ever since the marriage project with neighbour Hop-King had made shipwreck. But now poor Meta wished that Heaven had not heard the Prayer of the Church, or granted to the traveller any such abundance of success; but rather kept him by the bread and salt, which he would willingly have shared with her.

The fair half of the species are by no means calculated to conceal an inward care. Mother Brigitta soon observed the trouble of her daughter; and without the use of any great penetration, likewise guessed its cause. The talk about the re-ascending star of her former flax-negotiator, who was now celebrated as the pattern of an orderly, judicious, active tradesman, had not escaped her, any more than the feeling of the good Meta towards him; and it was her opinion, that if he loved in earnest, it was needless to hang off so long, without explaining what he meant. Yet out of tenderness to her daughter, she let no hint of this discovery escape her; till at length poor Meta's heart became so full, that of her own accord she made her mother the confidante of her sorrow, and disclosed to her its true origin. The shrewd old lady learned little more by this disclosure than she knew already But it afforded opportunity to mother and daughter for a full, fair and free discussion of this delicate affair Brigitta made her no reproaches on the subject; she believed that what was done could not be undone; and directed all her eloquence to strengthen and encourage the dejected Meta to bear the failure of her hopes with a steadfast mind.

With this view, she spelt out to her the extremely reasonable moral, *a*, *b*, *ab*, discoursing thus, "My child, thou hast already said *a*, thou must now say *b* too; thou hast scorned thy fortune when it sought thee, now thou must submit when

it will meet thee no longer. Experience has taught me, that the most confident Hope is the first to deceive us. Therefore, follow my example; abandon the fair cozener utterly, and thy peace of mind will no longer be disturbed by her. Count not on any improvement of thy fate; and thou wilt grow contented with thy recent situation. Honour the spinning-wheel, which supports thee. what are fortune and riches to thee, when thou canst do without them?"

Close on this stout oration followed a loud humming symphony of snap-reel and spinning-wheel, to make up for the time lost in speaking. Mother Brigitta was in truth philosophising from the heart. After her scheme for the restoration of her former affluence had gone to ruin, she had so simplified the plan of her life, that Fate could not perplex it any more. But Meta was still far from this philosophical centre of indifference; and hence this doctrine, consolation and encouragement affected her quite otherwise than had been intended: the conscientious daughter now looked upon herself as the destroyer of her mother's fair hopes, and suffered from her own mind a thousand reproaches for this fault. Though she had never adopted the maternal scheme of marriage, and had reckoned only upon bread and salt in her future wedlock, yet, on hearing of her lover's riches and spreading commerce, her diet-project had directly mounted to six plates; and it delighted her to think, that by her choice she should still realise her good mother's wish, and see her once more planted in her previous abundance.

This fair dream now vanished by degrees, as Franz continued silent. To make matters worse, there spread a rumour over all the city, that he was furnishing his house in the most splendid fashion for his marriage with a rich Antwerp lady, who was already on her way to Bremen. This Job's-news drove the lovely maiden from her last defence: she passed on the apostate sentence of banishment from her heart: and vowed from that hour never

more to think of him; and as she did so, wetted the twining thread with her tears.

In a heavy hour she was breaking this vow, and thinking, against her will, of the faithless lover: for she had just spun off a rock of flax; and there was an old rhyme which had been taught her by her mother for encouragement to diligence:

'Spin daughterkin, spin,
Thy sweetheart's within!'

which she always recollected when her rock was done; and along with it the memory of the Deceitful necessarily occurred to her. In this heavy hour, a finger rapped with a most dainty patter at the door Mother Brigitta looked forth. the sweetheart was without. And who could it be? Who else but neighbour Franz, from the alley? He had decked himself with a gallant wooing-suit; and his well-dressed, thick brown locks shook forth perfume. This stately decoration boded, at all events, something else than flax-dealing Mother Brigitta started in alarm; she tried to speak, but words failed her. Meta rose in trepidation from her seat, blushed like a purple rose, and was silent. Franz, however, had the power of utterance; to the soft *adagio* which he had in former days trilled forth to her, he now appended a suitable text, and explained his dumb love in clear words. Thereupon he made solemn application for her to her mother; justifying his proposal by the statement, that the preparations in his house had been meant for the reception of a bride, and that this bride was the charming Meta.

The pointed old lady, having brought her feelings once more into equilibrium, was for protracting the affair to the customary term of eight days for deliberation; though joyful tears were running down her cheeks, presaging no impediment, on her side, but rather answer of approval. Franz, however, was so pressing in his suit, that she fell upon a

middle path between the wooer's ardour and maternal use and wont, and empowered the gentle Meta to decide in the affair according to her own good judgment. In the virgin heart there had occurred, since Franz's entrance, an important revolution. His presence here was the most speaking proof of his innocence; and as, in the course of conversation, it distinctly came to light, that his apparent coldness had been nothing else than zeal and diligence in putting his commercial affairs in order, and preparing what was necessary for the coming nuptials, it followed that the secret reconciliation would proceed forthwith without any stone of stumbling in its way. She acted with the outlaw, as Mother Brigitta with her disposted spinning gear, or the First-born Son of the Church with an exiled Parliament; recalled him with honour to her high-beating heart, and reinstated him in all his former rights and privileges there. The decisive three-lettered little word, that ratifies the happiness of love, came gliding with such unspeakable grace from her soft lips, that the answered lover could not help receiving it with a warm melting kiss.

The tender pair had now time and opportunity for deciphering all the hieroglyphics of their mysterious love, which afforded the most pleasant conversation that ever two lovers carried on. They found, what our commentators ought to pray for, that they had always understood and interpreted the text aright, without once missing the true sense of their reciprocal proceedings. It cost the delighted bridegroom almost as great an effort to part from his charming bride, as on the day when he set out on his crusade to Antwerp. However, he had an important walk to take; so at last it became time to withdraw.

This walk was directed to the Weser-bridge, to find Timbertoe, whom he had not forgotten, though he had long delayed to keep his word to him. Sharply as the physiognomist, ever since his interview with the open-handed Bridge-bailiff, had been on the outlook, he could never catch

a glimpse of him among the passengers, although a second visit had been faithfully promised Yet the figure of his benefactor had not vanished from his memory. The moment he perceived the fair-apparelled youth from a distance, he stilted towards him, and gave him kindly welcome. Franz answered his salutation, and said: "Friend, canst thou take a walk with me into the Neustadt, to transact a small affair? Thy trouble shall not be unpaid."

"Ah; why not?" replied the old blade; "though I have a wooden leg, I can step you with it as stoutly as the lame dwarf that crept round the city-common; [1] for the wooden leg, you must know, has this good property, it never tires. But excuse me a little while till Graycloak is come: he never misses to pass along the Bridge between day and night."

"What of Graycloak?" inquired Franz: "let me know about him."

"Graycloak brings me daily about nightfall a silver groschen, I know not from whom. It is of no use prying into things, so I never mind. Sometimes it occurs to me Graycloak must be the devil, and means to buy my soul with the money. But devil or no devil, what care I? I did not strike him on the bargain, so it cannot hold"

"I should not wonder," answered Franz, with a smile, "if Graycloak were a piece of a knave But do thou follow me: the silver groschen shall not fail thee."

Timbertoe set forth, hitched on briskly after his guide, who conducted him up one street and down another, to a distant quarter of the city, near the wall, then halted before a neat little new-built house, and knocked at the door. When it was opened: "Friend," said he, "thou madest one evening of my life cheerful; it is just that I should make the evening of thy life cheerful also. This house, with its

[1] There is an old tradition, that a neighbouring Countess promised in jest to give the Bremers as much land as a cripple, who was just asking her for alms, would creep round in a day. They took her at her word; and the cripple crawled so well, that the town obtained this large common by means of him.—ED.

appurtenances, and the garden where it stands, are thine; kitchen and cellar are full; an attendant is appointed to wait upon thee; and the silver groschen, over and above, thou wilt find every noon lying under thy plate. Nor will I hide from thee that Graycloak was my servant, whom I sent to give thee daily an honourable alms, till I had got this house made ready for thee. If thou like, thou mayest reckon me thy proper Guardian Angel, since the other has not acted to thy satisfaction."

He then led the old man into his dwelling, where the table was standing covered, and everything arranged for his convenience and comfortable living. The grayhead was so astonished at his fortune, that he could not understand or even believe it. That a rich man should take such pity on a poor one, was incomprehensible: he felt disposed to take the whole affair for magic or jugglery, till Franz removed his doubts. A stream of thankful tears flowed down the old man's cheeks; and his benefactor, satisfied with this, did not wait till he should recover from his amazement and thank him in words, but, after doing this angel-message, vanished from the old man's eyes, as angels are wont; and left him to piece together the affair as he best could.

Next morning, in the habitation of the lovely Meta, all was as a fair. Franz despatched to her a crowd of merchants, jewellers, milliners, lace-dealers, tailors, soutors and sempstresses, in part to offer her all sorts of wares, in part their own good services. She passed the whole day in choosing stuffs, laces and other requisites for the condition of a bride, or being measured for her various new apparel. The dimensions of her dainty foot, her beautifully-formed arm and her slim waist, were as often and as carefully meted, as if some skilful statuary had been taking from her the model for a Goddess of Love. Meanwhile the bridegroom went to appoint the bans; and before three weeks were past, he led his bride to the altar, with a solemnity by which even the gorgeous wedding pomp of the Hop-King was eclipsed.

Mother Brigitta had the happiness of twisting the bridal-garland for her virtuous Meta; she completely attained her wish of spending her woman's-summer in propitious affluence; and deserved this satisfaction, as a recompense for one praiseworthy quality which she possessed: She was the most tolerable mother-in-law that has ever been discovered.

SALOMON GESSNER

(1730–1788)

A SCENE FROM THE DELUGE

(Translated by William Taylor)

Already the highest marble turrets were hidden beneath the flood, and black big waves were billowing against the insulated summits of the mountains, and island after island was vanishing before the climbing sea. On one of these lonely specks, too precipitous for ascent, a grisly crowd were trying to land, and uttered despairing cries, as the pursuing wave dashed them from the slippery side. Some had crawled to a less steep shore; but the hill above them, undermined by rising waves, slid with its whole burden of howling men into the deep. Yonder, collected torrents hurry down into the ocean a son, who was hoping to land an aged father, and had swum with him from a distant islet, now submerged. Here the mother, unable any longer to bear up her children, abandons herself with them to the watery grave.

Now only the highest summit peeped out of the waters. Semin, a noble youth, to whom the fairest of maids had sworn eternal truth, had landed his beloved Zemira on this pinnacle. Alone, for all the rest had been swept off by the flood, they stood in the howling storm-wind. The waves broke upon them, the thunder bellowed above them, and below roars a swelling ocean. Gloomy was the darkness around, unless when lightnings illuminated the dismal scene; every cloud threatened destruction from its dark brow, and every wave rolled carcasses along, and seemed

yawning for a further prey. Zemira pressed her lover to her trembling heart; tears mingled with the rain-drops which trickled down her pale cheeks; she spake with faltering voice. "There is no hope of safety more, my beloved Semin: we are on all sides surrounded with louring death. Oh desolation! Oh woe! You may see it climb nearer and nearer, the death which awaits us. Which of these billows is to submerge us? Hold me in thy cold and shivering arms, my beloved! Soon shall I, soon shalt thou, be no more, swept into the whirlpool of universal destruction. Now, my God, what a wave approaches! it glitters in the lightning—it passes over us." She spake, and sank powerless on Semin.

His trembling arm embraced his fainting mistress: his quivering lip could not pronounce, and he was mute. He no longer saw the spreading desolation around him: he beheld only his beloved in swoon, leaning on his bosom; and he felt more than the shudder of death. Now he kissed her cheeks, bleached by the cold rain, pressed her closer to his bosom, and said, "Zemira, beloved Zemira, awake! O come yet once again into these scenes of horror, that once again that eye may beam on me; that once again those pallid lips may tell me, I shall love thee until death—until these waves have swallowed us together."

He spake, and she awoke. she beheld him with a look of ineffable tenderness and sorrow, and then gazed around on the progressive destruction. "Oh God of judgment," she exclaimed, "is there no safety, no pity for us! How the waves rush, the thunders roar, and the voice of winds tells of this unatonable vengeance! Oh God, our years have passed in innocence. Thou, my Semin, wast the most virtuous of youths. Woe to me! thou hast adored my being with a thousand joys; but they are fled, they are gone for ever. And thou, who gavest me my life, thou too hast been torn from my side; and my tortured sight had to behold thee lifting up thy head above the waters, and thy arms for the

last time, as if to bless me. All are swallowed up. Yet Semin, Semin, this lonely and forsaken world could be a paradise to me, with thee still by my side. Oh God, our years have passed in innocence: is there no pity for the blameless —no salvation? What says my tormented heart? God pardon me! We are dying. What is human innocence to thee!"

The youth held his beloved, who shivered in the south wind, and spake: "Yes, my beloved, all life is washed off from the earth, no mortal now howls amid the roaring of this desolation. My beloved Zemira! the coming instant is our last. Yes, they are fled, all the hopes of our life; that holy moment when we vowed to each other inviolable constancy, we have in vain exulted in we are dying. Death ascends, he embraces our thighs. But let us not, like outcasts, pine over a common lot. What is the longest life and the most joyful, but a dew-drop which hangs to-day on the rock, and to-morrow falls into the ocean? Lift up thy courage. Beyond this life there is bliss and eternity. Let us not tremble to cross the narrow sea. Embrace me, and so let us await our fate. Soon, my Zemira, soon our souls will float above this devastation, and hover aloof with feelings of inexpressible felicity. So boldly hopes my soul, Oh God! yes, to him let us both uplift our joined hands in prayer. Shall mortal man presume to judge His ways? He who breathed life into us, can send death to the just or to the unjust. But happy they who have trodden the path of virtue. Not life, Oh Lord, do we ask for! take us to thy judgment seat; but Oh strengthen in us that hope, that holy hope of unspeakable bliss, which no death shall any more bring to an end. Then bellow, ye thunders! then crush desolation! then bury us, waters! Praised be the just One! and let this be the last thought which our souls think in these their mortal habitations."

Courage and joy arose in the soul of Zemira, and embellished her countenance. She lifted up her hands amid the

tempest, and said, " Yes, I feel these great and mighty hopes. Praise the Lord, Oh my mouth! weep tears of joy, my eyes, until ye are sealed by death! A heaven of happiness awaits you. Ye are but gone before, my beloved, who were lately torn from me: we, too, are coming: we soon shall meet again. Before his throne I behold the just, assembled; he has conducted them through the judgment-seat into the courts of mercy. Bellow, ye thunders! howl desolation! ye are but voices to proclaim His justice Break on us, waves! See, my beloved, death is coming nearer, on this rising, stifling blackness of the waves. Oh! Semin, embrace me, leave me not, the wave lifts me, I float."

" I embrace thee, Zemira," said the youth, " I embrace thee, death, with welcome! here we are. For ever praised be the just One."

So they spake; while the flood swept them away in each other's arms.

JOHANN AUGUST EBERHARDT

THE BET

(Translated by THOMAS ROSCOE)

IT happened that the Reverend Father in God, Henry, Bishop of Halberstadt, who flourished about the end of the sixteenth century, had once the pleasure of a visit from another Reverend Father of equal rank, which continued for several months. He was received in the most hospitable manner; and one summer evening, as both host and guest were chatting familiarly together; the large, round, well-filled wine cups, all fine silver, standing before them, they seemed inclined to drink more than usual. For the cups, they said, were but small, and the wine that day was very good. From the moment they sat down to dinner until now, nine in the evening, they had been chiefly entertained from the same large favourite wine vault, bequeathed years ago to the host by a celebrated Bishop, whose diocese also lay near the Rhine.

Both now agreed in opinion that it behoved every spiritual prince who had a just regard for his honour to follow so laudable an example, and build his cellar on the scale of the deceased prelate; and they proceeded to discuss how best such an undertaking might be executed. While minutely inquiring into all the bearings of such a building, the wine kept pace with the subject; but as the two together produce a soporific effect, our good Bishops had something to do to keep their eyes open. They yawned, and sipped, and rubbed their eyes; but they had almost exhausted their topic, which they could not renew as easily as their bottle.

The dialogue became still more dull, and was just on the point of coming to a standstill, when the host bishop's shepherd, Conrad, appeared driving his master's flock—a well-washed, well-fed, and numerous flock of sheep—as usual, past the bishop's window.

Now the good Bishop was himself in the habit of reviewing his flock every evening. As Conrad drew nearer to the spot, and he heard the bleating and the tinkling of the bells with which some of them were adorned, he could not resist his old practice of going to meet them, and he took his guest along with him into the courtyard. As he passed by, Conrad, the shepherd, respectfully doffed his cap to his master with his customary salute of "God save the Lord Bishop!"

"Good e'en to you, Conrad," was the reply; and then followed the old inquiry; "And where is the lame ram? Where is Harne?" Conrad stuck his two fingers in his mouth and gave a whistle, so loud and shrill that the stranger Bishop, not expecting such a cracking sound quite so near him, put both his hands to his ears as if to save their drums. After this whistle there came bounding along a large, handsome, clean-washed ram, who ran first to the shepherd, and next presented himself to the Bishop. The latter stroked, and offered him some pieces of bread, which he always put into his pocket for the purpose after dinner. Then, after saying a few more words to the shepherd, he concluded with the question, "Are you making preparation yet for your marriage?" Conrad only shrugged up his shoulders, and drove along his flock in perfect silence.

"Is not that an extraordinary fine sheep of mine?" said Bishop Henry to his guest; while the latter contented himself by returning a somewhat indifferent "Yes." "Yes!" echoed the Bishop of Halberstadt. "Why, I would not take any price for that animal, he is so tame and handsome. I have to thank my shepherd Conrad for this · he is the honestest fellow alive; he is honour itself."

His reverend brother laughed aloud at this singular eulogy;

and when the other inquired what excited his mirth, he replied, "My dear friend, honour is a rare article in these days. In the course of my travels and my residence in the Courts of princes, I have acquired some knowledge of mankind, and do not so easily mistake one thing for another, black for white! No, they cannot impose upon me."

The Bishop of Halberstadt granted that he might be right in the main; but for all that he would swear that his shepherd Conrad did not impose upon him; that he was an honest man.

"Stop there," cried his guest; "for I promise you he is not a hair better than others, only perhaps he is more cunning. Really honest servants are rarer than white ravens, and they are still less frequently to be met with, my friend, in the service of spiritual establishments. All of them deceive their masters; some, indeed, are better than others, but all are rouges."

Bishop Henry opposed this heartless doctrine with all his might, for his extra glasses of wine had mounted into his head, and he lauded the honour and virtue of all his spiritual subjects; but more especially those of his shepherd, who had never told him an untruth, or been guilty of any wrong action during the whole time he had been in his service.

"What, never!" cried his guest in an ironical tone. "Has he never lied, never circumvented or cheated *any* one, much less you?"

"No," returned the Bishop, with some warmth, "never. Conrad has never told me a lie, and never will."

"Never will," retorted his guest. "What, never! Now what will you bet me upon that? He'll lie, I warrant him!"

"Agreed, done!" cried the Bishop, offering his hand; "it is a bet!"

They shook hands, and after some desultory conversation as to the value of the bet, it was agreed, for the wine was still in their heads, that the loser should forfeit a vat of wine

to the winner, in which there should be one hundred and fifty fudders—German measure.

The space of three days was fixed upon, during which Conrad's honour was to be put to the test, and the Bishop of Halberstadt bound over his guest by note of hand, as well as by oath, not to give the least hint, either himself or by any third person, to the shepherd relating to the impending bet.

It was now late in the evening, and both these worthy prelates, having fared so well at dinner as well as after dinner, and feeling quite unable to renew the entertainment for that day, sighed for repose. So they took leave of each other for the night, each inwardly congratulating himself that by this lucky bet he had succeeded in securing a good stock of wine, out of which his reverend brother would in future be regaled without entrenching upon his own pocket, for both felt convinced that they must win.

Now in the train of the stranger Bishop was a certain domestic of the name of Peter. He was a very complete rogue in his way, and had the art of making himself so agreeable to his master as to be esteemed a kind of humble companion and privy counsellor in all little emergencies where the Bishop was inclined to doubt his own spiritual judgment.

Just before his master retired to rest it occurred to him that he would send for Peter. And so inveterate was his old habit of consultation now become, that in spite of his bond the moment Peter appeared he began to consult him; informing him of every circumstance that had passed, concluding with requesting his opinion as to how the wager might best be secured?

Peter, finding, from his master's account, the small estimation in which he held the servants of noble prelates, declaring that all were more or less rogues, had wit enough to see the dilemma in which he was placed. So he somewhat drily answered that he was sorry he was not capable

of advising his master in an affair of such a particular kind as this.

The Bishop, however, who had long known him, better than he imagined, quickly perceived the ground of his reluctance to enter on the subject; and feeling certain that the most greedy selfishness formed the chief ingredient in his servant's character, he plainly told him that in case he would assist in securing the impending wager he should receive a handsome remuneration, in addition to a new scarlet cap.

This was intelligible language to Peter, and he opened his mouth, though, consistently with his character, it was only to observe upon the very trifling reward proposed, considering the immense amount of the wager in question; for, after all, "What was a poor scarlet cap?" In fact, the Bishop was obliged to assure him that he did not intend to confine his gratitude to so slight a recompense before Peter would consent to put a hand to the job. But having made his terms, he was determined to spare nothing to bring the shepherd Conrad's honour into jeopardy; "Though he were a very phœnix of honesty," added he, "still he will have a fall."

On the following morning he rose with the determination to begin his machinations; and in a few hours he had learnt that Conrad had a sweetheart, the pretty Liese, to whom he was much attached. She would hear nothing of marriage, however, until he had a house of his own; and he was poor, and it would be the height of folly, in such circumstances, to load himself with the cares of a family.

All this Peter communicated to his master before dinner, and added that he had already obtained an interview with the fair Liese, and hence laid a plan to undermine the poor shepherd's integrity by means of the girl he loved. For this purpose he came to request a certain sum, which the bishop gave him.

He counted out the new shining pieces into his hand, reminding him at the same time to omit nothing that could tend to promote the success of their job. So Peter returned

to finish his dialogue with the shepherd's sweetheart Liese, which was renewed as follows:

Peter. I am glad to hear, Liese, that Conrad has long been an admirer of yours; he is a brave, honest-hearted man.

Liese. It is easy to say yes; but the ways and means are the main thing.

Peter. Oh, if he were really sincere, as no doubt he is, you need have no fear upon that head.

Liese. There you are mistaken, good man; we cannot live upon love, and money we have none.

Peter. Ah, does the shoe pinch there?

Liese. Too true! If Conrad had enough to buy a little house and a bit of land, it would alter the case. As it is, we must not think of marrying.

Peter. And why not? I will be bound to give you as much as you want, provided you will assist me in return.

With these words Peter took out his purse and displayed a handful of money, which he threw upon a little table, so as almost to cover it. The money shone very tempting in the maiden's eyes, and she longed to call it her own property. "Now," said the wily tempter, "the whole of this shall be yours when you agree to purchase for me the handsome ram belonging to Conrad's flock"

"Yes," said Liese, "but the ram does not belong to the shepherd." "What signifies that?" continued Peter; "he will find some means of obtaining it for you, at least if he loves you; and you must take no denial."

"There you do him injustice," returned Liese; "I know he would lay down his life for me."

"Then put his affection to the proof only so far."

Liese, in addition to her wish of obtaining the money, had now a curiosity to learn whether Conrad would make such a sacrifice to secure her affections. She promised the rogue that she would do everything in her power to engage Conrad to procure for him the handsome sheep, and Peter counted

out the money, promising to bring more when he saw his purchase. Farther to assure her, he said he would directly engage the little house and ground which she knew of, before any other purchaser should appear.

In fact he contrived to engage her so deep in his web of villainy that she could not retract, and her only chance now lay in vanquishing Conrad's scruples about the removal of the sheep. In this his wily plan Peter had so far succeeded.

On the following day Liese decked herself out more elegantly than usual, and took her way towards the neighbourhood where Conrad was accustomed to pasture his sheep As she approached the spot she pretended to be busily engaged in gathering herbs. Scarcely had Conrad got a sight of her before he ran to join her, and the tame sheep followed him. It was not long before he entered on the subject nearest his heart, inquiring earnestly when he might hope to call her his own. But Liese answered him, far colder than usual, "I have heard enough of this, Conrad, a thousand times over; it is all nonsense, you know, until you can inform me that you have got a house and piece of ground where we may live together comfortably, and be able to live! Yes, you know my mind, and until you can show me a house and field of our own, I shall never think of marrying."

Poor Conrad was turning sorrowfully away, quite cast down by his harsh treatment, such as he had never before received, when the artful maiden threw him an encouraging glance, adding, "A pretty specimen this of your love, Conrad, going off already in such a huff!" "Good Lord," cried the shepherd, "how you torture one! Just now you found fault with me, and now you seem to doubt my love. I declare I would give my life for you, if that would be of any use. Only put me to the proof!" "I do not want so much; but, as you desire it, I will just try whether your promises are worth anything." The tame sheep at this

moment thrust his head between the two lovers, and Liese gave him a piece of bread, which he began to eat. "Then give me this pretty sheep here, Conrad. I am sure I can bring you a noble price for him." The shepherd uttered an exclamation of surprise at the demand. At length he said, "Anything in the world, dear Liese, but not that. I never should be able to part with him, and if the Bishop were to miss his tame ram as I drove home in the evening, and no longer stroked him with his own hand—— No I could never bear that. Take the best ten of my own from the flock; you are welcome to them, but leave the ram!"

"There, I said so," cried Liese, in an offended tone; "you men are all the same. Off with you, then, with all your sheep; for you will not show me the least favour, even when on the point of marriage. What might I expect afterwards? I see too well! So away, I will have nothing more to say to you." With a frowning face she turned from him, though he entreated her, with tears in his eyes, not to exact so hard a proof of his affection. Sharp words—at least as harsh as lovers can use—now passed on both sides. The contest was long, but scarcely for a moment doubtful; for the maiden now acquainted Conrad that she had already agreed to dispose of the sheep, believing he would never refuse her; that, farther, she had accepted payment, and given earnest money, for the little property they had both so long wished for. In fact, she said, the sheep was sold, and must be delivered up cost what it would, for she had given her word, and disposed of the purchase money.

This account she accompanied with a flood of tears, vowing that it was all owing to her affection for him, and now she was to be held up to the world as a liar and deceiver, and this she was resolved she would never outlive. The sole cause was her desire to secure the house and ground, where they might have spent many happy days; but now all her sweetest hopes were destroyed by his heartless obstinacy, which she would never bear. "Were sheep never killed

before?" she inquired of the wretched Conrad, as she concluded her lecture. "Are they never lost or stolen? Does the wolf never devour them now, as formerly? Speak!" "I see it all," cried Conrad bitterly, quite vanquished by her reproaches and her tears; as he at the same time gave her his hand. "The sheep shall be delivered up to you before noon!" and in her turn Liese promised to become his wife at the month's end, and sealed this last contract with a kiss. The shepherd and his betrothed then took leave of each other, and Conrad gazed after her as long as she was in view.

Conrad, being now left alone, became more serious; his joy at the prospect of his marriage was sadly dashed by the thought of the scene that awaited him when the good Bishop should first miss his tame sheep. How could he meet his eye, how muster courage to impose upon so excellent a master? He had been so long in his service, and thus to steal and lie at last—to steal his tame sheep, too, in which he took so much pleasure; it quite confounded all his ideas, he hardly knew whether he was dreaming or awake.

He stood cogitating on the spot where Liese had just before been gathering herbs. "First," thought he, "I shall have to speak to the Bishop, and I must take care I am not taken by surprise and betray myself." He stuck his crook in the ground, then hung his coat over it, and placed his cap upon the top, declaring that he must try to act the part.

So he began to hold a dialogue with the Bishop's effigy, in the following words, in which the tame sheep at his side often came in for a part: "God save you, Lord Bishop!" he cried out to the effigy. "Good evening, Conrad," he went on. "Where is the tame sheep?" "The ram, my Lord Bishop! the tame ram has overrun me, I have sought him everywhere; I have whistled for him as loud as I could; but he has never returned."

Conrad then whistled, and the ram began to bound and play with the counterfeit Bishop before which the shepherd

was bowing to the ground. "Alas," sighed Conrad, shaking his head; "this will never do! the poor fellow is too fond of bread to think of running away. The Bishop will never believe it. No, no, I must hit upon something better. Well, then—Ah, my lord bishop, such a misfortune. Our handsome ram, poor Harne, is gone, stolen clean away!" Just as he said these words, and bowed low before the Bishop's image, poor Harne, as if in reply, gave him a pretty sharp push with his horns. "No, this is not the way either," exclaimed Conrad, as he turned angrily away from the hated spot; "it is not so easily done."

He next tried a variety of other means, all of which proved equally unsuccessful; and he shook his head, confessing that it was all of no use.

"Yet it must be done," he added; "it is to no purpose to think; at noon I am to deliver up poor Harne here, in order to save Liese's good name!" Again he began to meditate, and after some time, in which he muttered deeply, searching for some loophole by which to make his escape, he suddenly cried, with a more joyful and confident air: "I have it, I have it now, it is the best, and honour wears longest in the end"

He threw his cloak over his shoulders, donned his cap, and drove his flock further over the green. A little before noon he went away, deeply sighing, with the favourite ram, in order to deliver him to Liese. Without troubling herself with any scruples, she in her turn gave him up to Peter, who had paid so high for him, and received the rest of the money, which she paid for the new house; while Peter hastened to his master. He acquainted him with his success, and the stranger Bishop now chuckled in his sleeve at the idea of the approaching evening, when Conrad would appear as usual with his flock, and with a lie in his mouth, ready to impose upon his master. Peter seconded him in all his self-complacency and hopes of triumph over his host, omitting not, at the same time, to remind him respecting his promise of

the new scarlet cap and the other presents he was to receive in the morning.

At the appointed hour the two Bishops stationed themselves, as usual, in the courtyard of the Castle. Conrad now appeared in view, driving his flock from the field, and slowly approached the spot where the good prelates were waiting for him. The wily guest, with his servant Peter standing behind him, secretly congratulated himself upon the security of his wager, and both imagined they could trace in Conrad's features, as he approached, an expression of alarm, and the twinges of a conscience ill at rest.

Harne, the handsome ram, was nowhere to be seen, nor ran as usual to receive his allowance from the Bishop, and feel the honour of his lordly hand. "Where is Harne;" inquired the bishop, the moment that he missed him. "I have sold him," returned Conrad, in an earnest and decided tone; "he is not here. Honour wears the longest, my good Lord Bishop. I always shaped my course by it, and I will not depart from it now."

Peter's countenance grew a wonderfully deal longer when he heard these words, and his master looked little better; both being woefully disappointed and cast down. But Bishop Henry of Halberstadt cried in a loud tone, while his face darkened with the most ominous frowns, "Idiot as thou art! How dared you to think of selling the tame ram without first obtaining my permission? But I will——" "Most noble master," interrupted Conrad, "hear me patiently before you condemn me, let me beseech you! It was the maiden Liese who seduced me, exactly as Eve did Adam, and some arch villain hath likewise seduced Liese, exactly like the base fiend did Eve. If he will consent, however, to give me back the ram, I will not expose his name." At the same time, Conrad fixed his eyes upon Peter, who, full of rage and vexation, drew somewhat back; for he now saw full well that he should be accused of having thrown his master's money away for nothing, that he must go without

his new scarlet cap and all the other presents he had expected, while his tricks would be made manifest to the world.

"It was Liese," continued Conrad, "who engaged for the sale of Harne, or all this would never have happened." (At these words his master began to breathe, scenting which way the wind lay.) "You know how long we have loved each other, only waiting to marry until we had got a little more beforehand. She has received so large a sum for the sheep as to enable her to buy house and land sufficient to maintain us both, with industry and care. She engaged for all this, and when she had said, 'Yea, please your reverend honour, and I will marry you,' I could hardly get courage to say, 'No, you shall not;' for then I must have exposed her as an imposter to the world. With the priest's help and blessing she will soon be my wife; and I am sure Your Reverence is too good not to permit the happiness of two human beings on account of the sale of one sheep; and for a servant who has served you so long and faithfully. This is the whole truth of the matter, my Lord Bishop, and now deal with me as you will. What is done is done, and Harne is gone. But do not punish me harder than your own conscience will warrant; and do nothing to Liese, I beseech you. It was the base fiend blinded her, and all out of love for me, and I am in little better case myself."

These declarations appeared so hard of digestion to the Bishop that he was just on the point of giving fresh rein to his anger, when his guest, with a fierce look, turning towards Peter, said: "Thou jolterhead! Then I have lost my bet, after all, through thee!" and he stamped indignantly with his foot.

"What say you there?" inquired the Bishop of his guest, as he heard this final confirmation of his suspicions. Upon this the other could not avoid coming to an explanation of the whole affair, which afforded the Bishop of Halberstadt the greatest satisfaction. He the more easily forgave his shepherd, as by his excellent conduct he had secured him

the wager, having had the honesty and the courage to tell the truth.

"Well then, honour wears the longest!" cried both the Bishops in a breath; and Conrad's master added: "As a due return for your honourable conduct I take upon myself the whole expense of your marriage with Liese, and divide the whole flock with you."

To this the stranger Bishop added; "I shall not after this venture to be stingy. I freely give the shepherd back his ram; the money I gave he may retain—it will serve as a wedding dower for his wife, and the christening of the first child."

The Bishop of Halberstadt was shortly afterwards presented by his reverend friend with the large vat of wine which he had fairly won. Indeed, next to the mirror-mountain, it is pointed out as one of the most curious and interesting objects to be seen at Halberstadt; and is still known to attract the attention of those travellers, though now emptied of its contents, who are fond of investigating the prelatical antiquities of Germany.

JOHANN WOLFGANG VON GOETHE

(1749–1832)

I

THE GOOD WOMEN

(Translated by R. D. Boylan)

Henrietta and Armidoro had been for some time engaged in walking through the garden, in which the Summer Club was accustomed to assemble. It had long been their practice to arrive before the other members, for they entertained the warmest attachment to each other, and their pure and virtuous friendship fostered the delightful hope that they would shortly be united in the bonds of unchanging affection.

Henrietta, who was of a lively disposition, no sooner perceived her friend Amelia approach the summer-house from a distance, than she ran to welcome her.

The latter was already seated at a table in the antechamber, where the newspapers, journals, and other recent publications, lay displayed.

It was her custom to spend occasional evenings in reading in this apartment, without paying attention to the company who came and went, or suffering herself to be disturbed by the rattling of the dice or the loud conversation which prevailed at the gaming-tables. She spoke little, except for the purpose of rational conversation.

Henrietta, on the contrary, was not so sparing of her words, being of an easily satisfied disposition, and ever ready with expressions of commendation.

They were soon joined by a third person, whom we shall call Sinclair.

"What news do you bring?" exclaimed Henrietta, addressing him as he approached.

"You will scarcely guess," replied Sinclair, as he opened a portfolio. "And even if I inform you that I have brought for your inspection the engravings intended for the *Ladies' Almanack* of this year, you will hardly guess the subjects they portray; but when I tell you that young ladies are represented in a series of twelve engravings——"

"Indeed!" exclaimed Henrietta, interrupting him, "you have no intention, I perceive, of putting our ingenuity to the test. You jest, if I mistake not; for you know how I delight in riddles and charades, and in guessing my friends' enigmas. Twelve young ladies, you say;—sketches of character, I suppose; some adventures, or situations, or something else that redounds to the honour of the sex."

Sinclair smiled in silence, whilst Amelia watched him with calm composure, and then remarked, with that fine sarcastic tone which so well became her, "If I read his countenance truly, he has something to produce of which we shall not quite approve. Men are so fond of discovering something which shall have the appearance of turning us into ridicule."

Sinclair.—"You are becoming serious, Amelia, and threaten to grow satirical. I shall scarcely venture to open my little packet."

Henrietta.—"Oh! produce it."

Sinclair.—"They are caricatures."

Henrietta.—"I love them of all things."

Sinclair.—"Sketches of naughty ladies."

Henrietta.—"So much the better; we do not belong to that class. Their portraits would afford us as little pleasure as their society."

Sinclair.—"Shall I show them?"

Henrietta.—"Do so at once."

So saying, she snatched the portfolio from him, took out the pictures, spread six of them on the table, glanced over them hastily, and then shuffled them together as if they had been a pack of cards. "Capital!" she exclaimed, "they are done to the very life. This one, for instance, holding a pinch of snuff to her nose, is the very image of Madame S——, whom we shall meet this evening; and this old lady with the cat is not unlike my grand-aunt;—that figure, holding the skein of thread, resembles our old milliner. We can find an original for every one of these ugly figures; and even amongst the men, I have somewhere or other seen an old fellow bent double, just like that picture; and also a close resemblance to the figure holding the thread. They are full of fun, these engravings, and admirably executed."

Amelia, who had glanced carelessly at the pictures, and instantly withdrawn her eyes, inquired how they could look for resemblances in such things. "One deformity is like another, just as the beautiful ever resembles the beautiful. Our minds are irresistibly attracted by the latter, in the same degree as they are repelled by the former."

Sinclair.—"But our fancy and our wit find more amusement in deformity than in beauty. Much can be made of the former, but nothing at all of the latter."

"But beauty exalts, whilst deformity degrades us," observed Armidoro, who, from his post at the window, had paid silent attention to all that had occurred. Without approaching the table, he then adjourned into the adjoining cabinet.

All clubs have their peculiar epochs. The interest of the various members towards each other, and their friendly harmony together, is of a fluctuating character. The club of which we speak had now attained its zenith. The members were, for the most part, men of refinement, or at least of calm and quiet deportment; they mutually recognised each other's value, and allowed all want of merit to find its

own level. Each one sought his own individual amusement, and the general conversation was often of a nature to attract attention.

At this time, a gentleman named Leyton arrived, accompanied by his wife. He was a man who had seen much of the world, first from his engagement in business, and afterwards in political affairs; he was, moreover, an agreeable companion, although, in mixed society, he was chiefly remarkable for his talent as a card-player. His wife was a worthy woman, kind and faithful, and enjoying the most perfect confidence and esteem of her husband. She felt happy that she could now give uncontrolled indulgence to her taste for pleasure At home she could not exist without a companion, and she found in amusement and dissipation the only incentive to home enjoyment.

We must treat our readers as strangers, or rather as visitors to the Club, and in full confidence we must introduce them speedily to our new Society. A poet paints his characters by describing their actions; we must adopt a shorter course, and by a hasty sketch introduce our readers rapidly to the scenes.

Leyton approached the table and looked at the pictures.

"A discussion has arisen," observed Henrietta, "with respect to caricatures. What side do you take? I am an advocate for them, and wish to know whether all caricatures do not possess something irresistibly attractive?"

Amelia.—"And does not every evil calumny, provide it relate to the absent, also possess an incredible charm?"

Henrietta.—"But does not a sketch of this kind produce an indelible impression?"

Amelia.—"And that is just the reason why I condemn it. Is not the indelible impression of what is disagreeable precisely the evil which so constantly pursues us in life and destroys our greatest enjoyments?"

Henrietta.—"Favour us, Leyton, with your opinion."

Leyton.—"I should propose a truce to the argument.

Why should our pictures be better than ourselves? Our natures seem to have two sides, which cannot exist separately. Light and darkness, good and evil, height and depth, virtue and vice, and a thousand other contradictions unequally distributed, appear to constitute the component parts of human nature; and why, therefore, should I blame an artist who, while he paints an angel bright, brilliant and beautiful, on the other hand, paints a devil black, ugly and hateful?"

Amelia.—"There could be no objection to such a course if caricaturists did not introduce within their province subjects which belong to other spheres."

Leyton.—"So far I think you perfectly right. But artists whose province is the Beautiful alone, also appropriate what does not precisely belong to them."

Amelia.—"I have no patience, however, with caricaturists who ridicule the portraits of eminent men. In spite of my better sense, I can never consider that great man Pitt as anything else than a snub-nosed broomstick; and Fox, who was in many respects an estimable character, anything better than a stall-fed swine."

Henrietta.—"Precisely my view. Caricatures of such a nature make an indelible impression, and I cannot deny that it often affords amusement to evoke their recollection and pervert them even into worse distortions."

Sinclair.—"But, ladies, allow us to revert for a moment from this discussion, to a consideration of our engravings."

Leyton.—"I observe that a fancy for dogs is here delineated in no very flattering manner."

Amelia.—"That I have no objection to, for I detest such animals."

Sinclair.—"First an enemy to caricatures, and then unfriendly to the dog tribe."

Amelia.—"And why not? What are such animals but caricatures of men?"

Leyton.—"You remember, probably, what a certain

traveller relates of the city of Grätz, 'that the place was full of dogs, and of dumb persons half idiotic.' Might it not be possible that the habitual sight of so many barking, senseless animals should have produced an effect upon the human race?"

Sinclair.—"Our attachment to animals deteriorates our passions and affections."

Amelia.—"But if our reason, according to the general expression, is sometimes capable of standing still, it may surely do so in the presence of dogs."

Sinclair.—"Fortunately there is no one in our company who cares for dogs, but Madame Leyton. She is very much attached to her pretty greyhound."

Leyton.—"And that same animal is particularly dear and valuable to her husband."

Madame Leyton, from a distance, raised her finger to her lips in an attitude of playful threatening.

Leyton.—"I know a proof that such animals detach our affections from their legitimate objects. May I not, my dear child (addressing his wife), relate our anecdote? We need not be ashamed of it."

Madame Leyton signified her assent by a friendly nod, and he commenced his narration.

"We loved each other and had entered into an engagement to marry, before we had well considered the possibility of supporting an establishment.

"At length better hopes began to dawn, when I was unexpectedly compelled to set out upon a journey which threatened to last longer than I could have wished. On my departure I forgot my favourite greyhound. It had often been in the habit of accompanying me to my intended wife's house, sometimes returning with me, and occasionally remaining behind.

"It now became her property, was a cheerful companion, and reminded her of my return. At home the animal afforded much amusement, and in the promenades,

where we had often walked together, it seemed constantly engaged in looking for me, and barked as if announcing me, as it sprang from among the trees.

"My darling little Meta amused itself thus for a considerable time, by fancying me really present, until at length, about the time when I had hoped to return, the period of my absence being again indefinitely prolonged, the poor animal pined away and died."

Madame Leyton.—"Just so, dear husband! And your narrative is sweetly interesting."

Leyton.—"You are quite at liberty to interrupt me, my dear, if you think fit.

"My friend's house now seemed desolate, her walks had lost all their interest, her favourite dog which had ever been at her side when she wrote to me, had grown to be an actual necessity of existence, and her letters were now discontinued.

"But she found, however, some consolation in the company of a handsome youth, who evinced an anxiety to fill the place of her former four-footed companion, both in the house and in the promenades.

"But without enlarging on this subject, and let me be ever so inimical to rash judgments, I may say that matters began to assume a rather critical appearance."

Madame Leyton.—"I must let you continue. A story which is all truth and wholly free from exaggeration, is seldom worth hearing."

Leyton.—"A mutual friend of ours, who was a prudent man, versed in the world, and acquainted with human nature, continued to reside near my dear friend after my departure. He paid frequent visits at her house, and observed with pain and anxiety the change which she had undergone. He formed his plan in secrecy, and called upon her one day, accompanied by a greyhound which precisely resembled mine. The cordially affectionate and appropriate address with which he accompanied his present,

the unexpected appearance of a favourite, which seemed to have risen from the grave, the silent rebuke with which her susceptible heart reproached her at the sight, brought back to her mind a lively recollection of me. My young supplanter accordingly received his *congé* in the politest manner possible, and the new favourite was retained by the lady as her constant companion.

"When, upon my return, I held my beloved in my embrace, I thought the greyhound was my own, and wondered not a little that he barked at me as at a stranger. I thought that dogs of the present day had far less faithful memories than those of classical times, and observed that Ulysses had been remembered by his dog after many years' absence, whilst mine had forgotten me in an incredibly short space of time."

"'But yet he has taken good care of your Penelope,' she replied, promising at the same time to explain her mysterious speech.

"This was soon done, and unbroken confidence has ever been the characteristic of our union."

Madame Leyton.—"Well now, conclude with the anecdote. If you please I will walk for an hour, for you intend doubtless to sit down to the card-table."

He signified his assent. She took the arm of her companion and went towards the door.

"Take the dog with you, my dear!" he exclaimed as she departed.

The entire company smiled, as did Leyton also, when he saw the precise point of his unintentional observation and everyone else silently felt a trifling degree of malicious satisfaction.

Sinclair.—"You have related an anecdote of a dog which was happily instrumental in promoting a marriage; I can tell another whose influence destroyed one.

"I was also once in love, and it was also my fate to set out upon a journey, and, moreover, leave a dear young friend

behind me. But there was this difference between the two cases, my wish to possess my treasure had been as yet undeclared.

"At length I returned. The many adventures in which I had engaged were imprinted strongly in my mind. Like all travellers, I was fond of recounting them, and I hoped by this means to win the attention and sympathy of my beloved.

"I was anxious that she should know all the experience I had acquired and the pleasures I had enjoyed. But I found that her attention was wholly directed to a dog.

"Whether she so engaged herself from the spirit of opposition which so often characterises the fair sex, or whether it arose from some unlucky accident, it so happened that the amiable qualities of the dog, their amusements together, and her attachment to the little animal, were the sole topics of conversation which she could find for a lover who had long been passionately devoted to her.

"I wondered and felt astonished, and related a thousand circumstances to prove my affection for her.

"I then felt vexed at her coldness, and took my leave, but soon returned with feelings of self-reproach and became even more unhappy than before.

"Under these circumstances our attachment cooled and our acquaintance was discontinued, and I felt in my heart that I might attribute the misfortune to a dog."

Armidoro, who had once more joined the company from the cabinet, observed, upon hearing the anecdote, "that it would be interesting to make a collection of stories showing the influence which social animals of the lower order exercise over mankind. In the expectation that such a collection will one day be made, I will relate an anecdote to show how a dog was the cause of a very tragical occurrence.

"Ferdinand and Cardano, two young noblemen, had been attached friends from their very earliest youth. As

court pages and as officers in the same regiment, they had shared many adventures together, and had become thoroughly acquainted with each other's dispositions. Cardano's attraction was the fair sex, whilst Ferdinand had a passion for play. The former was thoughtless and haughty, the latter suspicious and reserved.

"It happened, at a time when Cardano was accidentally obliged to break off a certain tender attachment, that he left a beautiful little pet spaniel behind him. He soon procured another, which he afterwards presented to a second lady, from whom he was about to separate, and from that time, upon taking leave of every new female friend with whom he had been intimate, he invariably presented her with a similar little spaniel.

"Ferdinand was aware of Cardano's peculiar habit in this respect, but he never paid much attention to the circumstance.

"The different pursuits of the two friends at length caused a long separation between them, and when they next met, Ferdinand had become a married man, and was leading the life of a country gentleman.

"Cardano spent some time with him, either at his house or in the neighbourhood, where, as he had many relations and friends, he resided for nearly a year.

"Upon his departure Ferdinand's attention was attracted by a very beautiful spaniel of which his wife had lately become possessed. He took it in his arms, admired its beauty, stroked it, praised it, and inquired where she had obtained so charming an animal.

"She replied, 'From Cardano.'

"He was struck at once with the memory of bygone times and events, and with a recollection of the significant memorial with which Cardano was accustomed to mark his insincerity; he felt oppressed with the indignity of an injured husband, raged violently, flung the innocent little animal with fury to the earth, and ran from the apartment

amid the cries of the spaniel and the supplications of his astonished wife.

"A fearful dispute and countless disagreeable consequences ensued, which, though they did not produce an actual divorce, ended in a mutual agreement to separate, and a ruined household was the termination of this adventure."

The story was not quite finished when Eulalia entered the apartment She was a young lady whose society was universally sought after, and she formed one of the most attractive ornaments of the Club—an accomplished woman and a successful authoress. The female caricatures were laid before her with which the clever artist, before alluded to, had attacked the fair sex, and she was invited to defend her good sisterhood

"Probably," said Amelia, "a collection of these charming portraits is intended for the Almanack, and possibly some celebrated author will undertake the witty task of explaining in words what the ingenious artist has represented in his picture."

Sinclair felt that the pictures were not worthy of utter condemnation, nor could he deny that some sort of explanation of their meaning was necessary, as a caricature which is not understood is worthless, and is, in fact, only valuable for its application. For however the ingenious artist may endeavour to display his wit, he cannot always succeed, and without a title or an explanation his labour is lost: words alone can give it value.

Amelia.—"Then let words bestow a value upon this little picture. A young lady has fallen asleep in an armchair, having been engaged, as it appears, with some sort of writing. Another lady, who stands by weeping, presents a small box or something else, to her companion. What can it mean?"

Sinclair.—"Shall I endeavour to explain it? Notwithstanding that the ladies seem but ill disposed both to cari-

catures and their exposition. I am told that it is intended to represent an authoress, who was accustomed to compose at night; she always obliged her maid to hold her inkstand, and forced the poor creature to remain in that posture even when she herself had been overcome by sleep, and the office of her maid had been rendered useless. She was desirous, on awaking, to resume the thread of her thoughts and of her composition, and wished to find her pen and ink ready at the same moment."

Arbon, an artist of talent who had accompanied Emilia declared war against the picture. He observed that to delineate the situation or circumstance above alluded to, another course should have been adopted.

Henrietta.—"Let us then compose the picture afresh."

Arbon.—"But let us first of all consider the subject attentively. It seems natural enough that a person employed in writing should cause the inkstand to be held, if the circumstances are such that no place can be found to set it down. So Brantome's grandmother held the inkstand for the Queen of Navarre, when the latter, reposing in her litter, composed the history which we have all read with so much pleasure. Again, that anyone who writes in bed should cause his inkstand to be held, is quite conceivable. But tell us, pretty Henrietta, you who are so fond of questioning and guessing, tell us what the artist should have done to represent this subject properly."

Henrietta.—"He should have put the table away, and have so arranged the sleeper that nothing should appear at hand upon which an inkstand could be placed."

Arbon.—"Quite right. I should have drawn her in a well-cushioned easy-chair, of the fashion which, if I mistake not, are called Bergères; she should have been near the fireplace, and presenting a front view to the spectator. I should suppose her to be engaged in writing upon her knee, for usually one becomes uncomfortable in exacting an inconvenience from another. The paper sinks upon her

lap, the pen from her hand, and a sweet maiden stands near, holding the inkstand with a forlorn look."

Henrietta.—"Quite right. But here we have an inkstand upon the table already; and what is to be done, therefore, with the inkstand in the hand of the maiden? It is not easy to conceive why she should be engaged in wiping away her tears."

Sinclair.—"Here I defend the artist; he allows scope for the ingenuity of the commentators."

Arbon.—"Who will probably be engaged in exercising his wit upon the headless men that hang against the wall. This seems to me a clear proof of the inevitable confusion that arises from uniting arts between which there is no natural connection. If we were not accustomed to see engravings with explanations appended to them, the evil would cease. I have no objection that a clever artist should attempt witty representations, but they are difficult to execute, and he should at all events endeavour to make his subject independent of explanations. I should even tolerate remarks and little sentences issuing from the mouths of his figures, provided he restricted himself to being his own commentator."

Sinclair.—"But if you allow such a thing as a witty picture, you must admit that it is intended only for persons of intelligence; it can possess an attraction for none but those conversant with the occurrence of the day; why then should we object to a commentator who enables us to understand the nature of the intellectual amusement prepared for us?"

Arbon.—"I have no objection to explanations of pictures which fail to explain themselves. But they should be short and to the point. Wit is for the intelligent, they alone can understand a witty work, and the production of bygone times and foreign lands are completely lost upon us. It is all well enough with the aid of such notes as we find appended to Rabelais and Hudibras, but what should we

say of an author who should find it necessary to write one witty work to elucidate another? Wit, even when fresh from its fountain, is oftentimes feeble enough; it will scarcely become stronger by passing through two or three hands."

Sinclair.—"How I wish that, instead of thus arguing, we could assist our friend, the owner of these pictures, who would be glad to hear the opinions that have been expressed."

Armidoro (coming from the cabinet).—"I perceive that the company is still engaged about these censurable pictures: had they produced a pleasant impression, they would doubtless have been laid aside long ago."

Amelia.—"I propose that that be their fate now; the owner must be required to make no use of them. What! a dozen or more hateful, objectionable pictures to appear in a Ladies' Almanack! Can the man be blind to his own interest? He will ruin his speculation. What lover will present a copy to his mistress, what husband to his wife, what father to his daughter, when the first glance will display such a libel upon the sex?"

Armidoro.—"I have a proposal to make. These objectionable pictures are not the first of the kind which have appeared in the best almanacks. Our celebrated Chodoviecki has, in his collection of monthly engravings, already represented scenes not only untrue to nature, but low and devoid of all pretensions to taste; but how did he do it? Opposite the pictures I allude to he delineated others of a most charming character—scenes in perfect harmony with nature, the result of a high education, of long study, and of an innate taste for the Good and Beautiful. Let us go a step beyond the editor of the proposed Almanack, and act in opposition to his project. If the intelligent artist has chosen to portray the dark side of his subject, let our author or authoress, if I might dare to express my view, choose the bright side to exercise her talents and so form a complete work I shall not longer delay, Eulalia, to unite my

own wishes to this proposal. Undertake a description of good female characters. Create the opposite to those engravings, and employ the charm of your pen, not to elucidate these pictures, but to annihilate them."

Sinclair.—"Promise to comply, Eulalia, place us under so great an obligation to you."

Eulalia.—"Authors are ever apt to promise too easily, because they hope for ability to execute their wishes; but experience has rendered me cautious. And even if I could foresee the necessary leisure, within so short a space of time, I should yet hesitate to undertake the arduous duty. The praises of our sex should be spoken by a man,—a young, ardent, loving man. A degree of enthusiasm is requisite for the task, and who has enthusiasm for one's own sex?"

Armidoro.—"I should prefer intelligence, justice, and delicacy of taste."

Sinclair.—"And who can discourse better on the character of good women than the authoress from whose fairy tale of yesterday we all derived such pleasure, and so much incomparable instruction?"

Eulalia.—"The fairy tale was not mine."

Sinclair.—"Not yours?"

Armidoro.—"To that I can bear witness."

Sinclair.—"But still it was a lady's?"

Eulalia.—"The production of a friend."

Sinclair.—"Then there are two Eulalias."

Armidoro.—"Will you relate to the company what you so lately confided to me? You will hear with astonishment how this delightful production originated."

Eulalia.—"A young lady with whose great excellence I became accidentally acquainted upon a journey, found herself once in a situation of extreme perplexity, the circumstances of which it would be tedious to narrate.

"A gentleman to whom she was under many obligations, and who finally offered her his hand, having won her entire esteem and confidence, in a moment of weakness

obtained from her the privileges of a husband, before their vows of love had been cemented by marriage. Some peculiar circumstance compelled him to France, and in the retirement of a country residence she anticipated with fear and apprehension the moment when she should become a mother. She used to write to me daily, and inform me of every circumstance that happened. But there was shortly nothing more to fear—she now needed only patience, and I observed, from the tone of her letters that she began to reflect with a disturbed mind upon all that had already occurred, and upon what was yet to take place in her regard.

"I determined, therefore, to address her in an earnest tone, on the duty which she owed no less to herself than to her infant, whose support, particularly at the commencement of its existence, depended so much upon her mind being free from anxiety.

"I sought to console and to cheer her, and for this purpose sent her several volumes of fairy tales, which I expressed a wish that she should read.

"Her own desire to escape from the burden of her melancholy thoughts, and the arrival of these books, formed a remarkable coincidence. She could not help reflecting frequently upon her peculiar fate, and she therefore adopted the expedient of clothing all her past sorrowful adventures, as well as her painful apprehensions for the future, in a garb of romance.

"The events of her past life—her attachment, her passion, her errors, and her sweet maternal cares, no less than her present sad condition, were all embodied by her imagination in forms vivid, though impalpable, and passed before her mind in a varied succession of strange and unearthly fancies.

"With pen in hand she spent many a day and night in noting down her reflections."

Amelia.—"In which occupation she must have found it difficult to hold her inkstand."

Eulalia.—" Thus did I acquire the rare collection of letters which I now possess. They are all picturesque, strange and romantic. I never received from her an account of anything actual, so that I sometimes trembled for her reason. Her own situation, the birth of her infant, her sweet affection for her offspring, her joys, her hopes, and her maternal fears, were all treated as events of another world, from which she only expected to be liberated by the arrival of her husband.

" Upon her nuptial day she concluded the fairy tale which you heard recited yesterday, almost in her own words, and which derives its chief interest from the unusual circumstances under which it was composed."

The company could not sufficiently express their astonishment at this statement, and Leyton, who had abandoned his place at the gaming-table to another person, now entered the apartment, and made inquiries concerning the subject of conversation. He was briefly informed that it related to a fairy tale, which, partly founded on facts, had been composed by the fantastic imagination of a mind that was diseased.

" It is a great pity," he remarked, " that private diaries are so completely out of fashion. Twenty years ago they were in general use, and many persons thought they possessed a veritable treasure in the record of their daily thoughts. I recollect a very worthy lady upon whom this custom entailed a sad misfortune.

" A certain governess had been accustomed from her earliest youth to keep a regular diary, and, in fact, she considered its composition to form an indispensable part of her daily duties. She continued the habit when she grew up, and did not lay it aside even when she married. Her memorandums were not looked upon by her as absolute secrets, she had no occasion for such mystery, and she frequently read passages from it for the amusement of her friends and her husband. But the book in its entirety was entrusted to nobody.

"The account of her husband's attachment had been entered in her diary with the same minuteness with which she had formerly noted down the ordinary occurrences of the day; and the entire history of her own affectionate feelings had been described from their first opening hour until they had ripened into a passion, and become at length a rooted habit

"Upon one occasion this diary accidentally fell in her husband's way and the perusal afforded him a strange entertainment. He had undesignedly approached the writing-desk upon which the book lay, and, without suspicion or intention, had read through an entire page which was open before him.

"He took the opportunity of referring to a few previous and subsequent passages, and then retired with the comfortable assurance that it was high time to discontinue the disagreeable amusement."

Henrietta.—"But, according to the wish of my friend, our conversation should be confined to good women, and already we are turning to those who can scarcely be counted amongst the best."

Leyton.—"Why this constant reference to bad and good? Should we not be quite as well contented with others as with ourselves, either as we have been formed by nature, or improved by education?"

Armidoro.—"I think it would be at once pleasant and useful to arrange and collect a series of anecdotes such as we have heard narrated, and many of which are founded on real occurrences. Light and delicate traits, which mark the characters of men, are well worthy of our attention, even though they give birth to no extraordinary adventures. They are useless to writers of romance, being devoid of all exciting interest; and worthless to the tribe of anecdote collectors, for they are for the most part destitute of wit and spirit, but they would always prove entertaining to a reader who, in a mood of quiet contemplation, should wish to study the general characteristics of mankind."

Sinclair.—"Well said. And if we had only thought of so praiseworthy a work a little earlier, we might have assisted our friend, the editor of the *Ladies' Calendar*, by composing a dozen anecdotes, if not of model women, at least of well-behaved personages, to balance his catalogue of naughty ladies."

Amelia.—"I should be particularly pleased with a collection of incidents to show how a woman forms the very soul and existence of a household establishment; and this because the artist has introduced a sketch of a spendthrift and improvident wife, to the defamation of our sex."

Leyton.—"I can furnish Amelia with a case precisely in point."

Amelia.—"Let us hear it. But do not imitate the usual custom of men who undertake to defend the ladies; they frequently begin with praise, and end with censure."

Leyton.—"Upon this occasion, however, I do not fear the perversion of my intention, through the influence of any evil spirit. A young man once became tenant of a large hotel which was established in a good situation. Amongst the qualities which recommend a host, he possessed a more than ordinary share of good temper, and as he had from his youth been a friend to the ale-house, he was peculiarly fortunate in selecting a pursuit in which he found it necessary to devote a considerable portion of the day to his home duties.

"He was neither careful nor negligent, and his own good temper exercised a perceptible influence over the numerous guests who assembled around him.

"He had married a young woman, who was of a quiet passive disposition. She paid punctual attention to her business, was attached to her household pursuits, and loved her husband, though she often found fault with him in secret for his carelessness in money matters. She had a great love for ready money; she thoroughly comprehended its value, and understood the advantage of securing a provision for herself.

"Devoid of all activity of disposition, she had every tendency to avarice. But a small share of avarice becomes a woman, however ill extravagance may suit her. Generosity is a manly virtue, but parsimony is becoming in a woman. This is the rule of Nature, and our judgment must be subservient thereto.

"Margaret was very much dissatisfied with her husband's carelessness. Upon occasions when large payments were made to him by his customers it was his habit to leave the money lying for a considerable time upon the table, and then to collect it in a basket, from which he afterwards paid it away, without making it up into packages, and without keeping any account of its application.

"His wife plainly perceived that even without actual extravagance, where there was such a total want of system, considerable sums must be wasted. She was above all things anxious to make her husband change his negligent habits, and she became grieved to observe that the small savings which she collected and so carefully retained were as nothing in comparison with the money that was squandered, and she determined, therefore, to adopt a rather dangerous expedient to make her husband open his eyes.

"She resolved to defraud him of as much money as possible, and for this purpose had recourse to an extraordinary plan. She had observed that when he had once counted his money which he allowed to remain so long upon the table, he never reckoned it over a second time before putting it away; she therefore rubbed the bottom of a candlestick with tallow, and then, apparently without design, she placed it near the spot where the ducats lay exposed, a species of coin for which she entertained a warm partiality. She thus gained possession of a few pieces, and subsequently of some other coins, and was soon sufficiently well satisfied with her success. She therefore repeated the operation frequently, and entertained no scruple about employing such evil means to effect so praiseworthy an object, and she tranquillised her conscience on the subject

by the reflection that such a mode of abstracting her husband's money could not be termed robbery, as her hands were not employed for the purpose.

"Her secret treasure increased gradually, and soon became very much greater by the addition of the ready money which she herself received from the customers of the hotel, and of which she invariably retained possession.

"She had carried on this practice for a whole year, and though she carefully watched her husband, she never had any reason to believe that his suspicions were awakened, until at length he began to grow discontented and unhappy. She induced him to tell her the cause of his anxiety, and learned that he was grievously perplexed. After the last payment which he had made of a considerable sum of money, he had laid aside the amount of his rent, and not only this had disappeared, but he was unable to meet the demand of his landlord from any other channel; and as he had always been accustomed to keep his accounts in his head, and to write down nothing, he could not possibly understand the cause of the deficiency.

"Margaret reminded him of his great carelessness, censured his thoughtless manner of receiving and paying away money, and spoke of his general imprudence. Even his generous disposition did not escape her remarks; and in truth, he had no excuse to offer for a course of conduct the consequence of which he had so much reason to regret.

"But she could not leave her husband long in this state of grievous trouble, more especially as she felt a pride in being able to render him once more happy. Accordingly, to his great astonishment, on his birthday, which she was always accustomed to celebrate by presenting him with something useful, she entered his private apartment with a basket filled with rouleaux of money. The different kinds of coin were packed together separately, and the contents were carefully endorsed in a handwriting by no means of the best. It would be difficult to describe his astonishment

at finding before him the precise sum which he had missed, or at his wife's assurance that they belonged to him. She thereupon circumstantially described the time and the manner of her abstracting them, confessed the amount which she had taken and told also how much she had saved by her own careful attention. His despair was now changed into joy, and the result was that he abandoned to his wife all the duty of receiving and paying away money for the future.

"His business was carried on even more prosperously than before, although from the day of which we have spoken, not a farthing ever passed through his hands. His wife discharged the duty of banker with extraordinary credit to herself; no false money was ever taken, and the establishment of her complete authority in the house was the natural and just consequences of her activity and care; and, after the lapse of ten years, she and her husband were in a condition to purchase the hotel for themselves."

Sinclair.—"And so all this truth, love, and fidelity ended in the wife becoming the veritable mistress. I should like to know how far the opinion is just that women have a tendency to acquire authority."

Amelia.—"There it is again. Censure, you observe, is sure to follow in the wake of praise."

Armidoro.—"Favour us with your sentiments on this subject, good Eulalia. I think I have observed in your writings no disposition to defend your sex against this imputation."

Eulalia.—"In so far as it is a grievous imputation I should wish it were removed by the conduct of our sex. But where we have a right to authority, we can need no excuse! We like authority because we are human. For what else is authority, in the sense in which we use it, than a desire for independence, and for the enjoyment of existence as much as possible? This is a privilege which all men seek with determination, but our ambition appears, perhaps, more objectionable, because human nature, usage, and social

regulations place restraints upon our sex, whilst they enlarge the authority of men. What men possess naturally, we have to acquire, and property obtained by a laborious struggle will always be more obstinately held than that which is inherited.

Leyton.—"But women, as I think, have no reason to complain on that score. As the world goes, they inherit as much as men, if not more, and, in my opinion, it is a much more difficult task to become a perfect man than a perfect woman. The phrase, 'He shall be thy master,' is a formula characteristic of a barbarous age long since passed away. Men cannot claim a right to become educated and refined, without conceding the same privilege to women. As long as the process continues, the balance is even between them; but as women are more capable of improvement than men, experience shows that the scale soon turns in their favour.

Armidoro.—"There is no doubt that in all civilised nations women in general are superior to men, for where the two sexes exert a corresponding influence over each other, man becomes effeminate, and that is a disadvantage; but when a woman acquires any masculine virtue, she is the gainer, for if she can improve her own peculiar qualities by the addition of masculine energy, she becomes an almost perfect being."

Leyton.—"I have never considered the subject so deeply. But I think it is generally admitted that women do rule and must continue to do so, and therefore whenever I become acquainted with a young lady, I always inquire upon what subjects she exercises her authority, since it must be exercised somewhere."

Amelia.—"And thus you establish the point with which you started?"

Leyton.—"And why not? Is not my reasoning as good as that of philosophers in general, who are convinced by their experience? Active women, who are given to habits of acquisition and saving, are invariably mistresses at home;

pretty women, at once graceful and superficial, rule in large societies, whilst those who possess more sound accomplishments exert their influence in smaller circles."

Amelia.—"And thus we are divided into three classes."

Sinclair.—"All honourable, in my opinion; and yet those three classes do not include the whole sex. There is still a fourth, to which perhaps we had better not allude, that we may escape the charge of converting our praise into censure.

Henrietta.—"Then we must guess the fourth class. Let us see."

Sinclair.—"Well then, the three first classes were those whose activity was displayed at home, in large societies, or in smaller circles."

Henrietta.—"What other sphere can there be where we can exercise our activity?"

Sinclair.—"There may be many. But I am thinking of the reverse of activity?"

Henrietta.—"Indolence! How could an indolent woman rule?"

Sinclair.—"Why not?"

Henrietta.—"In what manner?"

Sinclair.—"By opposition. Whoever adopts such a course, either from character or principle, acquires more authority than one would readily think."

Amelia.—"I fear we are about to fall into the tone of censure so general to men."

Henrietta.—"Do not interrupt him, Amelia. Nothing can be more harmless than these mere opinions, and we are the gainers, by learning what other persons think of us. Now then for the fourth class, what about it?"

Sinclair.—"I must take the liberty of speaking unreservedly. The class I allude to does not exist in our country, and does not exist in France, because the fair sex, both amongst us and our gallant neighbours, enjoys a proper degree of freedom. But in countries where women are

under restraint and debarred from sharing in public amusements, the class I speak of is numerous. In a neighbouring country there is a peculiar name by which ladies of this class are invariably designated.

Henrietta.—"You must tell us the name; we can never guess names."

Sinclair.—"Well, if I must tell you, they are called roguish."

Henrietta.—"A strange appellation."

Sinclair.—"Some time ago you took great interest in reading the speculations of Lavater upon physiognomy; do you remember nothing about roguish countenances in his book?"

Henrietta.—"It is possible, but it made no impression upon me. I may perhaps have construed the word in its ordinary sense, and read on without noticing it."

Sinclair.—"It is true, that the word 'roguish' in its ordinary sense is usually applied to a person who, with malicious levity, turns another into ridicule; but in its present sense it is meant to describe a young lady, who, by her indifference, coldness, and reserve—qualities which attach to her as a disease—destroys the happiness of one upon whom she is dependent. We meet with examples of this everywhere; sometimes even in our own circle. For instance, when I have praised a lady for her beauty, I have heard it said in reply—'Yes, but she is a bit of a rogue.' I even remember a physician saying to a lady who complained of the anxiety she suffered about her maid-servant, 'My dear madam, the girl is somewhat of a rogue, and will give a deal of trouble.'"

Amelia rose from her seat and left the apartment.

Henrietta.—"That seems rather strange."

Sinclair.—"I thought so too, and I therefore took a note of the symptoms, which seemed to mark a disease half moral and half physical, and framed an essay which I entitled, 'A Chapter on Rogues,' and as I meant it to

form a portion of a work on general anthropological observations, I have kept it by me hitherto."

Henrietta.—"But you must let us see it, and if you know any interesting anecdotes to elucidate your meaning of the word 'rogue' they must find a place in our intended collection of novels."

Sinclair.—"This may be all very well, but I find I have failed in the object which brought me hither. I was anxious to find some one in this intelligent assembly to undertake an explanation of these engravings, or who could recommend a talented writer for the purpose; in place of which, the engravings are abused and pronounced worthless, and I must take my leave without having attained my purpose. But if I had only made notes of our conversation and anecdotes this evening, I should almost possess an equivalent."

Armidoro (coming from the cabinet, to which he had frequently retired).—"Your wish is accomplished. I know the motive of our friend, the editor of the work. I have taken down the heads of our conversation upon this paper. I will arrange the draft, and if Eulalia will kindly promise to impart to the whole that spirit of charming animation which she possesses, the graceful tone of the work, and perhaps also its contents, will in some measure expiate the offence of the artist for his ungallant attack."

Henrietta.—"I cannot blame your officious friendship, Armidoro, but I wish you had not taken notes of our conversation; it is setting a bad example. Our intercourse together has been quite free and unrestrained, and nothing can be worse than that our unguarded conversation should be overheard and written down, perhaps even printed for the amusement of the public."

But Henrietta's scruples were silenced by a promise that nothing should meet the public eye, except the little anecdotes which had been related.

Eulalia, however, could not be persuaded to edit the

notes of the shorthand writer. She had no wish to withdraw her attention from the fairy tale with which she was then occupied. The notes remained in possession of the gentlemen of the party, who, with the aid of their own memories, generously afforded their assistance, that they might thereby contribute to the general edification of all "good women."

JOHANN WOLFGANG VON GOETHE

(1749–1832)

***

II

A FAIRY TALE

WEARIED with the labours of the day, an old Ferryman lay asleep in his hut, on the bank of a wide river, which the late heavy rain had swollen to an unprecedented height. In the middle of the night he was awakened by a loud cry,—he listened—it was the call of some travellers who wished to be ferried over.

Upon opening the door, he was surprised to see two Will-o'-the-wisps dancing round his boat, which was still secured to its moorings. Speaking with human voices, they assured him that they were in the greatest possible hurry, and wished to be carried instantly to the other side of the river.

Without losing a moment, the old Ferryman pushed off and rowed across with his usual dexterity. During the passage the strangers whispered together in an unknown language, and several times burst into loud laughter, whilst

they amused themselves with dancing upon the sides and seats of the boat, and cutting fantastic capers at the bottom.

"The boat reels," cried the old man, "and if you continue so restless, it may upset. Sit down, you Will-o'-the-wisps."

They burst into loud laughter at this command, ridiculed the boatman, and became more troublesome than ever. But he bore their annoyance patiently, and they soon reached the opposite side of the river.

"Here is something for your trouble," said the passengers, shaking themselves, when a number of glittering gold pieces fell into the boat.

"What are you doing?" cried the old man, "some misfortune will happen should a single piece of gold fall into the water. The river which has a strong antipathy to gold, would become fearfully agitated and swallow both me and my boat. Who can even say what might happen to yourselves? I pray you take back your gold."

"We can take nothing back which we have once shaken from our persons," answered one of them.

"Then I shall be compelled," replied the boatman, as he stooped and gathered the gold into his cap, "to take it to the shore and bury it."

The Will-o'-the-wisps had in the meantime leaped out of the boat, upon which the old man cried, "Pay me my fare."

"The man who refuses gold must work for nothing," answered the Will-o'-the-wisps.

"My payment must consist of fruits of the earth," rejoined the Ferryman

"We despise them, they are not food for us," continued the Will-o'-the-wisps.

"But you shall not depart," replied the Ferryman, "till you have given me three cauliflowers, three artichokes, and three large onions."

The Will-o'-the-wisps were in the act of running away,

with a laugh, when they felt themselves in some inexplicable manner fixed to the earth; they had never experienced so strange a sensation. They then promised to pay the demand without delay, upon which the Ferryman released them and instantly pushed off with his boat.

He was already far away when they called after him. "Old man! listen, we have forgotten something important"; but he heard them not and continued his course.

When he had reached a point lower down, on the same side of the river, he came to some rocks which the water was unable to reach, and proceeded to bury the dangerous gold. Observing a deep cleft which opened between two rocks, he threw the gold into it, and returned to his dwelling. This cleft was inhabited by a beautiful green Dragon, who was awakened from her sleep by the sound of the falling money. At the very first appearance of the glittering pieces, she devoured them greedily, then searched about carefully in hopes of finding other such coins, as might have fallen accidentally amongst the briers, or between the fissures of the rocks.

The Dragon immediately felt herself overpowered by the most delightful sensations, and perceived with joy that she became suddenly shining and transparent. She had been long aware that this change was possible, but entertaining some doubt whether the brilliance would continue, she felt compelled by curiosity to leave her dwelling, and ascertain, if possible, to whom she was indebted for the beautiful gold. She found no one; but she became lost in admiration of herself, and of the brilliant light which illumined her path through the thick underwood, and shed its rays over the surrounding green. The leaves of the trees glittered like emeralds, and the flowers shone with glorious hues. In vain did she penetrate the solitary wilderness, but hope dawned when she reached the plains, and observed at a distance a light resembling her own. "Have I at last discovered my fellow?" she exclaimed, and hastened to the

spot. She found no obstacle from bog or morass; for though the dry meadow and the high rock were her dearest habitations and though she loved to feed upon the spicy root, and to quench her thirst with the crystal dew and with fresh water from the spring, yet for the sake of her beloved gold and of her glorious light, she was willing to encounter every privation.

Wearied and exhausted, she reached at length the confines of a wide morass, where our two Will-o'-the-wisps were amusing themselves in playing fantastic antics. She made towards them and saluting them, expressed her delight at being able to claim relationship with such charming personages. The lights played about her, skipped from side to side, and laughed about in their own peculiar fashion.

"Dear Aunt!" they exclaimed, "what does it signify, even though you are of horizontal form? We are related at least through brilliancy. But look how well a tall slender figure becomes us gentry of the vertical shape," and so saying both the lights compressed their breadth together and shot up into a thin and pointed line. "Do not be offended, dear friend," they continued, "but what family can boast of a privilege like ours. Since the first Will-o'-the-wisp was created, none of our race has ever been obliged to sit down or take repose."

But all this time the feelings of the Dragon in the presence of her relations were anything but pleasant; for, exalt her head as high as she would, she was compelled to stoop to earth again, when she wished to advance; and though she was proud of the brilliancy which she shed round her own dark abode, she felt her light gradually diminish in the presence of her relations, and she began to fear that it might finally be extinguished.

In her perplexity she hastily inquired whether the gentleman could inform her whence the shining gold had come, which had lately fallen into the cleft of the rocks hard by, as in her opinion it was a precious shower from heaven.

The Will-o'-the-wisps immediately shook themselves (at the same time laughing loudly), and a deluge of gold pieces at once flowed around. The Dragon devoured them greedily. "We hope you like them, dear Aunt," shouted the shining Will-o'-the-wisps; "we can supply you with any quantity," and they shook themselves with such copious effect that the Dragon found it difficult to swallow the bright dainties with sufficient speed.

Her brilliancy increased as the gold disappeared, till at length she shone with inconceivable radiance, while at the same proportion the Will-o'-the-wisps grew thin and tapering, without, however, losing the smallest iota of their cheerful humour.

"I am under eternal obligations to you," said the Dragon, pausing to breathe from her voracious meal, "ask of me what you please, I will give you anything you demand."

"A bargain!" answered the Will-o'-the-wisp; "tell us then where the beautiful Lily dwells, lead us to her palace and gardens without delay; we die of impatience to cast ourselves at her feet."

"You ask a favour," replied the Dragon, with a deep sigh, "which is not in my power so quickly to bestow. The beautiful Lily lives, unfortunately, on the opposite bank of the river. We cannot cross over on this stormy night."

"Cruel river, which separates us from the object of our desires! But cannot we call back the old Ferryman?" said they.

"Your wish is vain," answered the Dragon, "for even were you to meet him on this bank, he would refuse to take you, as, though he can convey passengers to this side of the stream, he can carry no one back."

"Bad news, indeed; but are there no other means of crossing the river?"

"There are, but not at this moment; I myself can take you over at mid-day."

"That is an hour," replied the Will-o'-the-wisps, "when we do not usually travel."

"Then you had better postpone your intention till evening, when you may cross in the giant's shadow."

"How is that managed?" they inquired.

"The giant," replied the Dragon, "who lives hard by, is powerless with his body; his hands are incapable of raising even a straw, his shoulders can bear no burden, but his shadow accomplishes all for him. For this reason, he is most powerful at sunrise and at sunset. At the hour of evening, the giant will approach the river softly, and if you place yourself upon his shadow, it will carry you over. Meet me at midday at the corner of the wood, where the trees hang over the river, when I myself will take you across and introduce you to the beautiful Lily. Should you, however, shrink from the noonday heat, your only alternative is to apply to the giant, when evening casts its shadows around, and he will no doubt prove obliging."

With a graceful salutation the young gentlemen took their leave, and the Dragon rejoiced at their departure, partly that she might indulge her feelings of pleasure at her own light, and partly that she might satisfy a curiosity by which she had been tormented.

In the clefts of the rock where she dwelt she had lately made a wonderful discovery; for although she had been obliged to crawl through these chasms in darkness, she had learnt to distinguish every object by feeling. The productions of Nature, which she was accustomed everywhere to encounter, were all of an irregular kind. At one time she wound her way amongst the points of enormous crystals, at another she was for a moment impeded by the veins of solid silver, and many were the precious stones which her light discovered to her. But, to her great astonishment, she had encountered in a rock, which was securely closed on all sides, objects which betrayed the plastic hand of man. Smooth walls, which she was unable to ascend, sharp,

regular angles, tapering columns, and what was even more wonderful, human figures, round which she had often entwined herself, and which appeared to her to be formed of brass or of polished marble. She was now anxious to behold all these objects with her eyes, and to confirm, by her own observation, what she had hitherto but suspected.

She thought herself capable now of illumining with her own light these wonderful subterranean caverns, and indulged the hope of becoming thoroughly acquainted with these astonishing mysteries.

She delayed not, and quickly found the opening through which she was accustomed to penetrate into the sanctuary.

Arrived at the place, she looked round with wonder, and though her brilliancy was unable to light the entire cavern, yet many of the objects were sufficiently distinct. With astonishment and awe, she raised her eyes to an illumined niche, in which stood the statue of a venerable King, of pure gold. In size the statue was colossal, but the countenance was that rather of a little than of a great man. His well-turned limbs were covered with a simple robe, and his head was encircled by an oaken garland.

Scarcely had the Dragon beheld this venerable form, than the King found utterance, and said, "How comest thou hither?"

"Through the cleft," answered the Dragon, "in which the gold abides."

"What is nobler than gold?" asked the King.

"Light," replied the Dragon.

"And what is more vivid than light?" continued the monarch.

"Speech," said the Serpent.

During this conversation, the Dragon had looked stealthily around, and observed another noble statue in an adjoining niche. A silver King sat there enthroned, of figure tall and slender; his limbs were enveloped in an embroidered mantle; his crown and sceptre were adorned with precious stones;

his countenance wore the serene dignity of pride, and he seemed about to speak, when a dark vein, which ran through the marble of the wall, suddenly became brilliant and cast a soft light through the whole temple. This light discovered a third King, whose mighty form was cast in brass; he leaned upon a massive club, his head was crowned with laurels, and his proportions resembled a rock rather than a human being.

The Dragon felt a desire to approach a fourth King, who stood before her at a distance; but the wall suddenly opened, the illumined vein flashed like lightning, and became as suddenly extinguished.

A man of middle stature now approached. He was clad in the garb of a peasant; in his hand he bore a lamp, whose flame it was delightful to behold, and which lightened the entire dwelling, without leaving the trace of a shadow.

"Why dost thou come, since we have already light?" asked the Golden King.

"You know I can shed no ray on what is dark," replied the old man.

"Will my kingdom end?" inquired the Silver Monarch.

"Late or never," answered the other.

The Brazen King then asked, with voice of thunder, "When shall I arise?"

"Soon," was the reply.

"With whom shall I be united?" continued the former.

"With thine elder brother," answered the latter.

"And what will become of the youngest?"

"He will repose."

"I am not weary," interrupted the fourth King, with a deep, but faltering voice.

During this conversation the Dragon had wound her way softly through the temple, surveyed everything which it contained, and approached the niche in which the fourth King stood. He leaned against a pillar, and his handsome countenance bore traces of melancholy.

It was difficult to distinguish the metal of which the statue was composed. It resembled a mixture of the three metals of which his brothers were formed; but it seemed as if the materials had not thoroughly blended, as the veins of gold and silver crossed each other irregularly through the brazen mass, and destroyed the effect of the whole.

The Golden King now asked, "How many secrets dost thou know?"

"Three," was the reply.

"And which is the most important?" inquired the silver King.

"The revealed," answered the old man.

"Wilt thou explain it to us?" asked the Brazen King.

"When I have learnt the fourth," was the response.

"I care not," murmured he of the strange compound.

"I know the fourth," interrupted the Dragon, approaching the old man, and whispering in his ear.

"The time is come," exclaimed the latter, with tremendous voice.

The sounds echoed through the temple; the statues rang again; and in the same instant the old man disappeared towards the west, and the Dragon towards the east, and both pierced instantly through the impediments of the rock.

Every passage through which the old man bent his course became immediately filled with gold; for the lamp which he carried possessed the wonderful property of converting stones into gold, wood into silver, and dead animals into jewels. But in order to produce this effect, it was necessary that no other light should be near. In the presence of another light the lamp merely emitted a soft illumination, which, however, gave joy to every living thing.

The old man returned to his hut on the brow of the hill, and found his wife in the greatest sorrow. She was seated at the fire, her eyes filled with tears, and she refused all consolation.

"What a misfortune," she exclaimed, "that I allowed you to leave home to-day!"

"What has happened?" asked the old man very quietly.

"You were scarcely gone," replied she with sobs, "before two rude travellers came to the door; unfortunately I admitted them, as they seemed good worthy people. They were attired like flames, and might have passed for Will-o'-the-wisps; but they had scarcely entered the house before they commenced their flatteries, and became at length so importunate that I blush to recollect their conduct."

"Well," said the old man, smiling, "the gentlemen were only amusing themselves, and, at your age, you should have considered it as the display of ordinary politeness!"

"My age!" rejoined the old woman. "Will you for ever remind me of my age? How old am I, then? And ordinary politeness! But I can tell you something; look round at the walls of our hut, you will now be able to see the old stones which have been concealed for more than a hundred years. These visitors extracted all the gold more quickly than I can tell you, and they assured me it was of capital flavour. When they had completely cleared the walls they grew more cheerful, and, in a few minutes, their persons became tall, broad and shining. They thereupon again commenced their tricks, and repeated their flatteries, calling me a queen. They shook themselves, and immediately a profusion of gold pieces fell on all sides. You may see some of them still glittering on the floor; but a calamity soon occurred. Our dog Mops swallowed some of them, and see, he lies dead in the chimney corner. Poor animal! his death afflicts me. I did not observe it till they had departed, otherwise I should not have promised to pay the Ferryman the debt they owed him."

"How much do they owe?" inquired the old man.

"Three cauliflowers," answered his wife, "three arti-

chokes and three onions. I have promised to take them to the river at break of day."

"You had better oblige them," said the old man, "and they may perhaps serve us in time of need."

"I know not if they will keep their word," said she, "but they promised and vowed to serve us."

The fire had in the meantime died away; but the old man covered the cinders with ashes, put away the shining gold pieces, and lighted his lamp afresh. In the glorious illumination the walls became covered with gold, and Mops was transformed into the most beautiful onyx that was ever beheld. The variety of colour which glittered through the costly gem produced a splendid effect.

"Take your basket," said the old man, "and place the onyx in it. Then collect the three cauliflowers, the three artichokes, and the three onions, lay them together and carry them to the river. The Dragon will bear you across at midday; then visit the beautiful Lily; her touch will give life to the onyx, as her touch gives death to every living thing; and it will be to her an affectionate friend. Tell her not to mourn; that her deliverance is nigh; that she must consider a great misfortune as her greatest blessing, for the time is come."

The old woman prepared her basket, and set forth at break of day. The rising sun shone brightly over the river, which gleamed in the far distance. The old woman journeyed slowly on, for the weight of the basket oppressed her, but it did not arise from the onyx. Nothing lifeless proved a burden, for when the basket contained dead things it rose aloft, and floated over her head. But a fresh vegetable, or the smallest living creature, induced fatigue. She had toiled along for some distance, when she started and suddenly stood still; for she had nearly placed her foot upon the shadow of the Giant, which was advancing towards her from the plain. Her eye now perceived his monstrous bulk; he had just bathed in the river, and was coming out

of the water. She knew not how to avoid him. He saw her, saluted her jestingly and thrust the shadow of his hand into her basket; with dexterity he stole a cauliflower, an artichoke, and an onion, and raised them to his mouth. He then proceeded on his course up the stream, and left the woman alone.

She considered whether it would not be better to return, and supply the missing vegetables from her own garden, and lost in these reflections, she went on her way until she arrived at the bank of the river. She sat down and awaited a long time the arrival of the Ferryman. He appeared at length, having in his boat a traveller whose air was mysterious. A handsome youth, of noble aspect, stepped on shore.

"What have you brought with you?" said the old man.

"The vegetables," replied the woman, "which the Will-o'-the-wisps owe you," pointing to the contents of her basket.

But when he found that there were but two of each kind he became angry and refused to take them.

The woman implored him to relent, assuring him that she could not then return home, as she had found her burden heavy, and she had still a long way to go.

But he was obstinate, maintaining that the decision did not depend upon him.

"I am obliged to collect my gains for nine hours," said he, "and I can keep nothing for myself, till I have paid a third part to the river."

At length, after much contention, he told her there was still a remedy. "If you give security to the river, and acknowledge your debt, I will take the six articles, though such a course is not devoid of danger."

"But if I keep my word, I incur no risk," she said earnestly.

"Not the least," he replied. "Thrust your hand into the river, and promise that within twenty-four hours you will pay the debt."

The old woman complied, but shuddered as she observed that her hand, on drawing it out of the water, had become as black as coal. She scolded angrily, exclaiming that her hands had always been most beautiful, and that notwithstanding her hard work she had ever kept them white and delicate.

She gazed at her hand with the greatest alarm, and exclaimed, "This is still worse; it has shrunk, and is already much smaller than the other."

"It only appears so now," said the Ferryman, "but if you break your word, it will be so in reality. Your hand will in that case grow smaller, and finally disappear, though you will still preserve the use of it."

"I would rather," she replied, "lose it altogether and that my misfortune should be concealed. But no matter, I will keep my word, to escape this black disgrace, and avoid so much anxiety."

Whereupon she took her basket, which rose aloft, and floated freely over her head. She hastened after the youth, who was walking thoughtfully along the bank. His noble figure and peculiar attire had made a deep impression on her mind.

His breast was covered with a shining cuirass, whose transparency permitted the motions of his graceful form to be seen. From his shoulders hung a purple mantle, and his auburn locks waved in beautiful curls round his uncovered head. His noble countenance and his well-turned feet were exposed to the burning rays of the sun. Thus did he journey patiently over the hot sand, which "true to one sorrow, he trod without feeling."

The garrulous old woman sought to engage him in conversation, but he heeded her not, or answered briefly; until, notwithstanding his beauty, she became weary, and took leave of him, saying, "You are too slow for me, sir, and I cannot lose my time, as I am anxious to cross the river, with the assistance of the Green Dragon, and to present the

beautiful Lily with my husband's handsome present." So saying she left him speedily, upon which the youth took heart and followed her without delay.

"You are going to the beautiful Lily," he exclaimed; "if so, our way lies together. What present are you taking her?"

"Sir," answered the woman, "it is not fair that you should so earnestly inquire after my secrets, when you paid so little attention to my questions. But if you will relate your history to me, I will tell you all about my present."

They made the bargain; the woman told her story, including the account of the dog, and allowed him to view the beautiful onyx.

He lifted the beautiful precious stone from the basket, and took Mops, who seemed to slumber softly in his arms.

"Fortunate animal!" he exclaimed. "You will be touched by her soft hands, and restored to life, in place of flying from her contact, like all other living things, to escape an evil doom. But, alas! what words are these? Is it not a sadder and more fearful fate to be annihilated by her presence, than to die by her hand? Behold me, thus young, what a melancholy destiny is mine! This armour, which I have borne with glory in the battle-broil, this purple which I have earned by the wisdom of my government, have been converted by Fate, the one into an unceasing burden, the other into an empty honour. Crown, sceptre, and sword are worthless. I am now as naked and destitute as every other son of clay. For such is the spell of her beautiful blue eyes that they waste the vigour of every living creature; and those whom the contact of her hand does not destroy are reduced to the condition of breathing shadows."

Thus he lamented long, but without satisfying the curiosity of the old woman, who sought information respecting his mental no less than his bodily sufferings. She

learnt neither the name of his father nor his kingdom. He stroked the rigid Mops, to whom the beams of the sun and the caresses of the youth had imparted warmth. He inquired earnestly about the man with the lamp, about the effect of the mysterious light, and seemed to expect thence a relief from his deep sorrow.

So discoursing, they observed at a distance the majestic arch of the bridge, which stretched from one bank of the river to the other, and shone splendidly in the beams of the sun. Both were astonished at the sight as they had never before seen it so resplendent.

"How," cried the Prince, "was it not sufficiently beautiful before, with its decorations of jasper and opal? Can we now dare to cross over it, constructed as it is of emerald and chrysolite of varied beauty?"

Neither had any idea of the change which the Dragon had undergone; for in truth it was the Dragon, whose custom it was at midday to arch her form across the stream, and assume the appearance of a beauteous bridge, which travellers crossed with silent reverence.

Scarcely had they reached the opposite bank, when the bridge began to sway from side to side, and gradually sank to the level of the water, when the Green Dragon assumed her accustomed shape, and followed the travellers to the shore.

The latter thanked her for her condescension, in allowing them a passage across the stream, observing, at the same time, that there were evidently more persons present than were actually visible.

They heard a light whispering, which the Dragon answered with a similar sound. They listened, and heard the following words: "We will first make our observations unperceived, in the parts of the beautiful Lily, and look for you when the shadows of evening fall, to introduce us to such perfect beauty. You will find us on the bank of the great lake."

"Agreed," answered the Dragon, and her hissing voice dissolved in the distance.

Our three travellers further consulted with what regard to precedence they should appear before the beautiful Lily; for let her visitors be ever so numerous, they must enter and depart singly, if they wished to escape bitter suffering.

The woman, carrying in the basket the transformed dog, came first to her garden and sought an interview with her benefactress. She was easily found, as she was then singing to her harp. The sweet tones showed themselves first in the form of circles upon the bosom of the calm lake, and then like a soft breeze, they imparted motion to the grass and to the tremulous leaves. She was seated beneath the shade of trees, and at the very first glance she enchanted the eyes, the ear, and the heart of the old woman, who advanced towards her with rapture, and protested that since their last meeting she had become more beautiful than ever.

Even from a distance she saluted the charming maiden in these words: "What joy to be in your presence! What a heaven surrounds you! What a spell proceeds from your lyre, which, encircled by your soft arms, and influenced by the pressure of your gentle bosom, and slender fingers, utters such entrancing melody! Thrice happy the blessed youth who could claim so great a favour!"

So saying, she approached nearer. The beautiful Lily raised her eyes, let her hands drop and said, "Do not distress me with your untimely praise; it makes me feel even more unhappy. And see, here is my beautiful canary dead at my feet, which used to accompany my songs so sweetly; he was accustomed to sit upon my harp, and was carefully instructed to avoid my touch. This morning, when, refreshed by sleep, I tuned a pleasant melody, the little warbler sang with increased harmony, when suddenly a hawk soared above us. My little bird sought refuge in my bosom, and at that instant I felt the last gasp of his expiring breath. It is true that the hawk, struck by my

instantaneous glance, fell lifeless into the stream; but what avails this penalty to me?—my darling is dead, and his grave will but add to the number of the weeping willows in my garden."

"Take courage, beautiful Lily," interrupted the old woman, whilst at the same moment she wiped away a rising tear, which the narration of the sorrowful maiden had brought to her eye—"take courage and learn from my experience to moderate your grief. Great misfortune is often the harbinger of intense joy. For the time approaches; but in truth," continued she, "the web of life is of a mingled yarn." See my hand, how black it has grown, and in truth, it has become much diminished in size; I must be speedy before it is reduced to nothing. Why did I promise favours to the Will-o'-the-wisps, or meet the giant, or dip my hand into the river? Can you oblige me with a cauliflower, an artichoke, and an onion? I shall take them to the river, and then my hand will become so white, that it will almost equal the lustre of your own."

"Cauliflowers and onions abound, but artichokes cannot be procured. My garden produces neither flowers nor fruit; but every twig which I plant upon the grave of anything I love, bursts into leaf at once, and grows a goodly tree. Thus, beneath my eyes, alas! have grown these clustering trees and copses. These tall pines, these shadowing cypresses, these mighty oaks, these overhanging beeches, were once small twigs planted by my hand, as sad memorials in an ungenial soil"

The old woman paid but little attention to this speech, but was employed in watching her hand, which in the presence of the beautiful Lily became every instant of a darker hue, and grew gradually less.

She was about to take her basket and depart, when she felt that she had forgotten the most important of her duties. She took the transformed dog in her arms, and laid him upon the grass, not far from the beautiful Lily. "My

husband," she said, "sends you this present. You know that your touch can impart life to this precious stone. The good and faithful animal will be a joy to you, and my grief in losing him will be alleviated by the thought that he is yours."

The beautiful Lily looked at the pretty creature with delight, and rapture beamed from her eyes. "Many things combine together to inspire hope; but, alas! is it not a delusion of our nature, to expect that joy is near when grief is at the worst?"

"Ah! what avail these omens all so fair?
My sweet bird's death—my friend's hand blackly dyed,
And Mops transformed into a jewel rare,
Sent by the Lamp our faltering steps to guide.
Far from mankind and every joy I prize
To grief and sorrow I am still allied—
When from the river will the Temple rise,
Or the Bridge span it o'er from side to side?"

The old woman waited with impatience for the conclusion of the song, which the beautiful Lily had accompanied with her harp, entrancing the ears of every listener. She was about to say farewell, when the arrival of the Dragon compelled her to remain.

She had heard the last words of the song, and spoke words of encouragement to the beautiful Lily.

"The prophecy of the bridge is fulfilled," she exclaimed; "this good woman will bear witness how splendidly the arch now appears. Formerly of untransparent jasper, which only reflected the light upon the sides, it is now converted into precious jewels of transparent hue. No beryl is so bright, and no emerald so splendid."

"I congratulate you thereupon," said the Lily, "but pardon me if I doubt whether the prediction is fulfilled. Only foot-passengers can as yet cross the arch of your bridge; and it has been foretold that horses and carriages, travellers of all descriptions, shall pass and repass in mingled

multitudes. Is prediction silent with respect to the mighty pillars which are to ascend from the river?"

The old woman, whose eyes were fixed immovably upon her hand, interrupted this speech, and bade farewell.

"Wait for one moment," said the beautiful Lily, "and take my poor canary-bird with you. Implore the lamp to convert him into a topaz, and I will then reanimate him with my touch, and he and your good Mops will then be my greatest consolation. But make what speed you can, for with sunset decay will have commenced its withering influence, marring the beauty of its delicate form."

The old woman enveloped the little corpse in some soft young leaves, placed it in the basket, and hastened from the spot.

"Notwithstanding what you say," continued the Dragon, resuming the interrupted conversation, "the temple is built."

"But it does not yet stand upon the river," replied the beautiful Lily.

"It rests still in the bowels of the earth," continued the Dragon. "I have seen the Kings, and spoken to them."

"And when will they awake?" inquired the Lily.

The Dragon answered, "I heard the mighty voice resound through the temple, announcing that the hour was come."

A ray of joy beamed from the countenance of the beautiful Lily as she exclaimed, "Do I hear those words for the second time to-day? When will the hour arrive when I shall hear them for the third time?"

She rose, and immediately a beautiful maiden came from the wood and relieved her of her harp. She was followed by another, who took the ivory chair upon which the beautiful Lily had been seated, folded it together, and carried it away, together with the silver-tissued cushion. A third maiden, who bore in her hand a fan inlaid with pearls, approached to tender her services if they should be needed.

These three maidens were lovely beyond description, though they were compelled to acknowledge that their charms fell far short of those of their beautiful mistress.

The beautiful Lily had, in the meantime, surveyed the marvellous Mops with a look of pleasure. She leaned over him and touched him. He instantly leaped up, looked round joyously, bounded with delight, hastened to his benefactress and caressed her tenderly.

She took him in her arms and pressed him to her bosom. "Cold though thou art," she said, "and endued with only half a life, yet art thou welcome to me. I will love thee fondly, play with thee sportively, kiss thee softly, and press thee to my heart."

She let him go a little from her, called him back, chased him away again, and played with him so joyously and innocently, that no one could help sympathising in her delight and taking part in her pleasure, as they had before shared her sorrow and her woe.

But this happiness and this pleasant pastime were interrupted by the arrival of the melancholy youth. His walk and appearance were as we have before described; but he seemed overcome by the heat of the day, and the presence of his beloved had rendered him perceptibly paler. He bore the hawk upon his wrist, where it sat with drooping wing as tranquil as a dove.

"It is not well," exclaimed the Lily, "that you should vex my eyes with that odious bird, which has only this day murdered my little favourite."

"Blame not the luckless bird," exclaimed the youth: "rather condemn yourself and fate; and let me find an associate in this companion of my grief."

Mops, in the meantime, was incessant in his caresses; and the Lily responded to his affection with the most gentle tokens of love.

She clapped her hands to drive him away, and then sportively pursued to win him back. She caught him in

her arms as he tried to escape, and chased him from her when he sought to nestle in her lap.

The youth looked on in silence and in sorrow; but when at length she took him in her arms, and pressed him to her snowy breast, and kissed him with her heavenly lips, he lost all patience, and exclaimed in the depths of his despair, "And must I, then, whom sad destiny compels to live in your presence, and yet be separated from you, perhaps for ever—must I, who for you have forfeited everything, even my own being—must I look on and behold this 'defect of nature' gain your notice, win your love, and enjoy the paradise of your embrace? Must I continue to wander and measure my solitary way along the banks of this stream? No! a spark of my former spirit still burns within my bosom. Oh! that it would mount into a glorious flame. If stones may repose within your bosom, then let me be converted to a stone; and if your touch can kill, I am content to receive my death at your hands."

He became violently excited; the hawk flew from his wrist; he rushed towards the beautiful Lily; she extended her arms to forbid his approach, and touched him undesignedly. His consciousness immediately forsook him, and with dismay she felt the beautiful burden lean for support upon her breast. She started back with a scream, and the fair youth sank lifeless from her arms to the earth.

The deed was done. The sweet Lily stood motionless, and gazed intently on the breathless corpse. Her heart ceased to beat, and her eyes were bedewed with tears. In vain did Mops seek to win her attention: the whole world had died out with her lost friend. Her dumb despair sought no help, for help was now in vain.

But the Dragon became immediately more active. Her mind seemed occupied with thoughts of rescue; and, in truth, her mysterious movements prevented the immediate consequence of this dire misfortune. She wound her serpentine form in a wide circle round the spot where the body

lay, seized the end of her tail between her teeth and remained motionless.

In a few moments one of the servants of the beautiful Lily approached, carrying the ivory chair, and with friendly entreaties compelled her mistress to be seated. Then came a second, bearing a flame-coloured veil, with which she rather adorned than covered the head of the Lily. A third maiden offered her the harp, and scarcely had she struck the chords, and awakened their delicious tones than the first maiden returned, having in her hands a circular mirror of lustrous brightness, placed herself opposite the Lily, intercepted her looks, and reflected the most enchanting countenance which nature could fashion. Her sorrow added lustre to her beauty, her veil heightened her charms, the harp lent her a new grace, and though it was impossible not to hope that her sad fate might soon undergo a change, one could almost wish that that lovely and enchanting vision might last for ever.

Silently gazing upon the mirror, she drew melting tones of music from her harp; but her sorrow seemed to increase, and the chords responded to her melancholy mood. Once or twice she opened her sweet lips to sing, but her voice refused utterance; whereupon her grief found refuge in tears. Her two attendants supported her in their arms, and her harp fell from her hands, but the watchful attention of her handmaid caught it and laid it aside.

"Who will fetch the man with the lamp?" whispered the Dragon in low but audible voice. The maidens looked at each other, and the beautiful Lily's tears fell faster.

At this instant the old woman with the basket returned breathless with agitation. "I am lost and crippled for life," she exclaimed. "Look! my hand is nearly withered. Neither the Ferryman nor the Giant would set me across the river because I am indebted to the stream. In vain did I tempt them with a hundred cauliflowers and a hundred

onions, they insist upon the stipulated three, and not an artichoke can be found in the neighbourhood."

"Forget your distress," said the Dragon, "and give your assistance here; perhaps you will be relieved at the same time. Hasten and find the Will-o'-the-wisps, for though you cannot see them by daylight, you may perhaps hear their laughter and their motions. If you make good speed the giant may yet transport you across the river, and you may find the man with the lamp and send him hither."

The old woman made as much haste as possible, and the Dragon as well as the Lily evinced impatience for her return. But sad to say, the golden rays of the setting sun were shedding their last beams upon the highest tops of the trees, and lengthening the mountain shadows over lake and meadow. The motions of the Dragon showed increased impatience, and the Lily was dissolved in tears.

In this moment of distress, the Dragon looked anxiously around; she feared every instant that the sun would set, and that decay would penetrate within the magic circle, and exert its full influence upon the corpse of the beautiful youth. She looked into the heavens and caught sight of the purple wings and breast of the hawk, which were illumined by the last rays of the sun.

Her restlessness betrayed her joy at the good omen, and she was not deceived, for instantly afterwards she saw the man with the lamp sliding across the lake as if his feet had been furnished with skates.

The Dragon did not alter her position, but the Lily, rising from her seat, exclaimed, "What good spirit has sent you thus opportunely when you are so much longed for and required?"

"The Spirit of my Lamp impels me," replied the old man, "and the hawk conducts me hither. The former flickers when I am needed, and I immediately look to the heavens for a sign, when some bird or meteor points the way which I should go. Be tranquil, beautiful maiden, I

know not if I can help you, one alone can do but little, but he can avail who in the proper hour unites his strength with others. We must wait and hope."

Then turning to the Dragon, he said, "Keep your circle closed," and seating himself upon a hillock at his side, he shed a light upon the corpse of the youth. "Now bring the little canary-bird," he continued, "and lay it also within the circle."

The maiden took the little creature from the basket and followed the directions of the old man. The sun had set in the meantime, and as the shadows of evening closed around, not only the Dragon and the Lamp cast their customary light, but the veil of the beautiful Lily was illumined with a soft brilliancy which caused her pale cheeks and white robe to beam like the dawn of morning, and clothed her with inexpressible grace.

Her appearance gave birth to various emotions; anxiety and sorrow were softened by hope of approaching happiness.

To the delight of all, the old woman appeared with the lively Will-o'-the-wisps, who must have led a prodigal life of late, for they looked wonderfully thin; but, nevertheless, behaved most politely to the Princess and to the other young ladies.

With an air of confidence, and much force of expression, they discoursed upon ordinary topics; and they were much struck by the charm which the shining veil shed, over the beautiful Lily and her companions.

The young ladies cast down their eyes with modest looks, and their beauty was heightened by the flattery which they heard. Every one was happy and contented, not excepting even the old woman.

Notwithstanding the assurance of her husband that her hand would not continue to wither whilst the Lamp shone upon it, she continued to assert that if things went on thus it would disappear entirely before midnight.

The old man with the Lamp had listened attentively to

the speech of the Will-o'-the-wisps, and was charmed to observe that the beautiful Lily was pleased and flattered with their compliments.

In very truth midnight came before they were aware. The old man looked up to the stars and thus spoke: "We are not at a fortunate hour: let each fulfil his office, let each discharge his duty, and a general happiness will alleviate one individual trouble, as a universal sorrow loosens particular joys."

After these observations, a mysterious murmur arose; for everyone present spoke for himself, and mentioned what he had to do: the three maidens only were silent. One had fallen asleep near the harp, the other beside the fan, and the third leaning against the ivory chair; and no one could blame them, for in truth it was late.

The Will-o'-the-wisps, after paying some trivial compliments to the other ladies, including even the attendants, attached themselves finally to the Lily, by whose beauty they were attracted.

"Take the mirror," said the old man to the hawk, "and illumine the fair sleepers with the first beams of the sun, and rouse them from their slumbers by the light reflected from heaven."

The Dragon now began to move: she broke up the circle, and retreated with strange evolutions to the river.

The Will-o'-the-wisps followed her in solemn procession, and they might have been mistaken for the most serious personages.

The old woman and her husband took up the basket, the soft light from which had been hitherto scarcely observed; but it now became clearer and more brilliant. They laid the body of the youth within it, with the canary-bird reposing upon his breast, upon which the basket raised itself into the air and floated over the head of the old woman, and she followed the steps of the Will-o'-the-wisps. The beautiful Lily, taking Mops in her arms, walked after the

old woman, and the man with the lamp closed the procession. The whole neighbourhood was brilliantly illuminated with all these various lights.

They all observed with astonishment, on approaching the river, that it was spanned by a majestic arch, by which means the benevolent Dragon had prepared them a lustrous passage across.

The transparent jewels of which the bridge was composed were objects of no less astonishment by day than was their wondrous brilliancy by night. The clear arch above cut sharply against the dark heaven, whilst vivid rays of light beneath shone against the keystone, revealing the firm pliability of the structure. The procession moved slowly over, and the Ferryman, who witnessed the proceeding from his hut, surveyed the brilliant arch with awe, no less than the wondrous lights as they journeyed across it.

As soon as they had reached the opposite bank, the bridge began to contract as usual and sink to the surface of the water. The Dragon made her way to the shore, and the basket descended to the ground. The Dragon now once more assumed a circular shape, and the old man bowing before her, asked what she had determined to do.

"To sacrifice myself before I am made a sacrifice; only promise me that you will leave no stone on the land."

The man promised, and then addressed the beautiful thus: "Touch the Dragon with your left hand, and your lover with your right."

The beautiful Lily knelt down and laid her hands upon the Dragon and the corpse. In an instant, the latter became endued with life: he moved, and then sat upright. The Lily wished to embrace him, but the old man held her back, and assisted the youth whilst he led him beyond the limits of the circle.

The youth stood erect, the little canary fluttered upon his shoulder, but his mind was not yet restored. His eyes

were open, but he saw, at least he appeared to look on everything with indifference.

Scarcely was the wonder at this circumstance appeased, than the change which the Dragon had undergone excited attention. Her beautiful and slender form was converted into thousands and thousands of precious stones. The old woman, in the effort to seize her basket, had struck unintentionally against the Dragon, after which nothing more was seen of the figure of the latter. Only a heap of brilliant jewels lay in the grass. The old man immediately set to work to collect them into his basket; a task in which he was assisted by his wife; they both then carried the basket to an elevated spot on the bank, when he cast the entire contents into the stream, not, however, without the opposition of his wife and of the beautiful Lily, who would willingly have appropriated a portion of the treasure to themselves. The jewels gleamed in the rippling waters like brilliant stars, and were carried away by the stream, and none can say whether they disappeared in the distance or sank to the bottom.

"Young gentlemen," then said the old man, respectfully, to the Will-o'-the-wisps, "I will now point out your path and lead the way, and you will render us the greatest service by opening the doors of the temple through which we must enter, and which you alone can unlock."

The Will-o'-the-wisps bowed politely, and took their post in the rear. The man with the lamp advanced first into the rock, which opened of its own accord; the youth followed with apparent indifference; with silent uncertainty the beautiful Lily lingered slowly behind; the old woman, unwilling to be left alone, followed after, stretching out her hand that it might receive the rays of her husband's lamp; the procession was closed by the Will-o'-the-wisps, and their bright flames nodded and blended with each other as if they were engaged in active conversation.

They had not gone far before they came to a large brazen

gate which was fastened by a golden lock. The old man thereupon sought the assistance of the Will-o'-the-wisps, who did not want to be entreated, but at once introduced their pointed flames into the lock, when the wards yielded to their influence. The brass resounded as the doors flew wide asunder, and displayed the venerable statues of the Kings illuminated by the advancing lights. Each individual in turn bowed to the reverend potentates with respect, and the Will-o'-the-wisps were prodigal of their lambent salutations.

After a short pause the Golden King asked, "Whence do you come?"

"From the world," answered the old man.

"And whither are you going?" inquired the Silver King.

"Back to the world," was the answer.

"And what do you wish with us?" asked the Brazen King.

"To accompany you," responded the old man.

The fourth King was about to speak, when the golden statue thus addressed the Will-o'-the-wisps, who had advanced towards him: "Depart from me, my gold is not for you."

They then turned towards the Silver King, and his apparel assumed the golden hue of their yellow flames. "You are welcome," he said, "but I cannot feed you; satisfy yourselves elsewhere, and then bring me your light."

They departed, and stealing unobserved past the Brazen King, they attached themselves to the King composed of various metals.

"Who will rule the world?" inquired the latter in inarticulate tones.

"He who stands erect," answered the old man.

"That is I," replied the King.

"Then it will be revealed," said the old man, "for the time is come."

The beautiful Lily fell upon his neck and kissed him

tenderly. "Kind father," she said, "a thousand thanks for allowing me to hear this comforting word for the third time," and so saying she felt compelled to grasp the old man's arm, for the earth began to tremble beneath them; the old woman and the youth clung to each other, whilst the pliant Will-o'-the-wisps felt not the slightest inconvenience.

It was evident that the whole temple was in motion, and like a ship which pursues its quiet way from the harbour when the anchor is raised, the depths of the earth seemed to open before it, whilst it clove its way through.

It encountered no obstacle—no rock opposed its progress. Presently a very fine rain penetrated through the cupola.

The old man continued to support the beautiful Lily, and whispered, "We are now under the river, and shall soon attain the goal."

Presently they thought the motion ceased, but they were deceived, the temple still moved onwards. A strange sound was now heard above them: beams and broken rafters burst in disjointed fragments through the opening of the cupola. The Lily and the old woman retreated in alarm; the man with the lamp stood by the youth and encouraged him to remain.

The Ferryman's little hut had been ploughed from the ground by the advance of the temple, and, in its gradual fall, buried the youth and the old man.

The women screamed in alarm, and the temple shook like a vessel which strikes upon a hidden rock.

Anxiously the women wandered round the hut in darkness; the doors were shut, and no one answered to their knocking.

They continued to knock more loudly, when at last the wood began to ring with sounds; the magic power of the lamp, which was enclosed within the hut, changed it into silver, and presently its very form was altered, for the noble metal, refusing to assume the form of planks, posts, and rafters, was converted into a glorious building of artistic

workmanship; it seemed as if a smaller temple had grown up within the large one, or at least an altar worthy of its beauty.

The noble youth ascended a staircase in the interior, whilst the man with the lamp shed light upon his way, and another figure lent him support, clad in a short white garment, and holding in his hand a silver rudder; it was easy to recognise the Ferryman, the former inhabitant of the transformed hut.

The beautiful Lily ascended the outward steps, which led from the temple to the altar, but was compelled to remain separated from her lover.

The old woman, whose hand continued to grow smaller, whilst the light of the lamp was obscured, exclaimed, "Am I still doomed to be unhappy amid so many miracles; will no miracle restore my hand?"

Her husband pointed to the open door, exclaiming, "See, the day dawns; hasten and bathe in the river."

"What advice!" she answered; "shall I not become wholly black, and dissolve into nothing; for I have not yet discharged my debt?"

"Be silent," said the old man, "and follow me; all debts are wiped away."

The old woman obeyed, and in the same instant the light of the rising sun shone upon the circle of the cupola.

Then the old man, advancing between the youth and the maiden, exclaimed with a loud voice, "Three things have sway upon the earth—Wisdom, Appearance, and Power."

At the sound of the first word, the Golden King arose; at the sound of the second, the Silver King; and the Brazen King had risen at the sound of the third, when the fourth suddenly sunk awkwardly to the earth.

The Will-o'-the-wisps, who had been busily employed upon him till this moment, now retreated; though paled by the light of the morning, they seemed in good condition,

and sufficiently brilliant, for they had with some dexterity extracted the gold from the veins of the colossal statue with their sharp pointed tongues.

The irregular spaces which were thus displayed remained for some time exposed, and the figure preserved its previous form; but when at length the most secret veins had been extracted, the statue suddenly fell with a crash, and formed a mass of shapeless ruins. The man with the lamp conducted the youth, whose eye was still fixed upon vacancy, from the altar towards the Brazen King. At the foot of the mighty monarch lay a sword in a brazen sheath.

The youth bound it to his side.

"Take the weapon in your left hand, and keep the right hand free," exclaimed the King.

They then advanced to the Silver Monarch, who bent his sceptre towards the youth; the latter seized it with his left hand, and the King addressed him in soft accents, "Find my sheep."

When they reached the statue of the Golden King, with paternal benediction the latter pressed the oaken garland on the head of the youth, and said, "Acknowledge the highest."

The old man had, during this proceeding, watched the youth attentively. After he had girded on the sword his breast heaved, his arm was firmer, and his step more erect; and after he had touched the sceptre, his sense of power appeared to soften, and at the same time, by an inexpressible charm, to become more mighty; but when his waving locks were adorned with the oaken garland, his countenance became animated, his soul beamed from his eye, and the first word he uttered was "Lily!"

"Dear Lily," he exclaimed, as he hastened to ascend the silver stairs, for she had observed his progress from the altar where she stood—"dear Lily, what can man desire more blessed than the innocence and the sweet affection which your love brings me?"

"Oh, my friend!" he continued, turning to the old man, and pointing to the three sacred statues, "secure and glorious is the kingdom of our fathers, but you have forgotten to enumerate that fourth power, which exercises an earlier, more universal, and certain rule over the world—the power of love."

With these words he flung his arms round the neck of the beautiful maiden; she had cast aside her veil, and her cheeks were tinged with a blush of the sweetest and most inexpressible beauty.

The old man now observed, with a smile, "Love does not rule, but controls, and that is better."

During all this delight and enchantment, no one had observed that the Sun was now high in heaven, and through the open gates of the temple most unexpected objects were perceived.

An empty space, of large dimensions, was surrounded by pillars, and terminated by a long and splendid bridge, whose many arches stretched across the river. On each side was a footpath, wide and convenient for passengers, of whom many thousands were busily employed in crossing over; the wide road in the centre was crowded with flocks and herds, and horsemen and carriages, and all streamed over without impeding each other's progress.

All were in raptures at the union of convenience and beauty; and the new King and his spouse were as much charmed with the animation and activity of this great concourse, as they were with their own reciprocal love.

"Honour the Dragon," said the man with the lamp; "to her you are indebted for life, and your people, for the bridge whereby those neighbouring shows are animated and connected. Those shining precious stones which still float by, are the remains of her self-sacrifice, and form the foundation stones of this glorious bridge, upon which she has erected herself to subsist for ever."

The approach of four beautiful maidens, who advanced

to the door of the temple, prevented any inquiry into this wonderful mystery.

Three of them were recognised as the attendants of the beautiful Lily, by the harp, the fan and the ivory chair; but the fourth, though more beautiful than the other three, was a stranger; she, however, played with the others with sisterly sportiveness, ran with them through the temple, and ascended the silver stairs.

"Thou dearest of creatures!" said the man with the lamp, addressing the beautiful Lily, "you will surely believe me for the future. Happy for thee, and every other creature who will bathe this morning in the waters of the river!"

The old woman, who had been transformed into a beautiful young girl, and of whose former appearance no trace remained, embraced the man with the lamp with tender caresses, which he returned with affection.

"If I am too old for you," he said, with a smile, "you may to-day select another bridegroom, for no tie can henceforth be considered binding which is not this day renewed."

"But are you not aware that you also have become young?" she inquired.

"I am delighted to hear it," he replied. "If I appear to you to be a gallant youth, I take your hand anew, and hope for a thousand years of happiness to come."

The Queen welcomed her new friend, and advanced with her and the rest of her companions to the altar, whilst the King, supported by two men, pointed to the bridge, and surveyed with wonder the crowd of passengers; but his joy was soon overshadowed by observing an object which gave him pain. The Giant, who had just awakened from his morning sleep, stumbled over the bridge, and gave rise to the greatest confusion. He was, as usual, but half awake, and had risen with the intention of bathing in the neighbouring cone, but he stumbled instead upon firm land, and found himself feeling his way upon the broad highway of

the bridge. And whilst he went clumsily along in the midst of men and animals, his presence, though a matter of astonishment to all, was felt by none; but when the sun shone in his eyes, and he raised his hand to shade them, the shadow of his enormous fist fell among the crowd with such careless violence, that both men and animals huddled together in promiscuous confusion, and either sustained personal injury, or ran the risk of being driven into the water.

The King, observing this calamity, with an involuntary movement placed his hand upon his sword; but, upon reflection, turned his eyes upon his sceptre, and then upon the lamp and the rudder of his companions.

"I guess your thought," said the man with the lamp, "but we are powerless against this monster; be tranquil, he injures for the last time, and happily his shadow is turned from us."

In the meantime the Giant had approached, and overpowered with astonishment at what he saw, his hands sunk down, became powerless for injury, and gazing with surprise he entered the courtyard.

In imagination he was ascending toward heaven, when he felt himself suddenly fast bound to the earth. He stood like a colossal pillar constructed of red shining stones, and his shadow indicated the hours which were marked in a circle on the ground, not, however, in figures, but in noble and significant effigies.

The King was not a little delighted to see the shadow of the monster rendered harmless; and the Queen was not less astonished, as she advanced from the altar with her maidens, all adorned with the greatest magnificence, to observe the strange wonder which almost covered the whole prospect from the temple to the bridge.

In the meantime the people had crowded after the Giant, and surrounding him as he stood still, had observed his transformation with the utmost awe.

They bent their steps then towards the temple, of the

existence of which they now seemed to be for the first time aware, and thronged the doorways.

The hawk was now observed aloft, towering over the building, and carrying the mirror, with which he caught the light of the sun, and turned the rays upon the multifarious group which stood around the altar.

The King, the Queen, and their attendants, illumined by the beam from heaven, appeared beneath the dim arches of the temple; their subjects fell prostrate before them.

When they had recovered, and had risen again, the King and his attendants had descended to the altar, in order to reach his palace by a less-obstructed path, and the people dispersed through the temple to satisfy their curiosity.

They beheld with astonishment the three Kings who stood erect, and they were all anxiety to know what could be concealed behind the curtain in the fourth niche; since whatever kindness might have prompted the deed, a thoughtful discretion had extended a costly covering over the ruins of the fallen King, which no eye cared to penetrate; and no profane hand dared to uplift.

There was no end to the astonishment and wonder of the people; and the dense throng would have been crushed in the temple if their attention had not been attracted once more to the court without. To their great surprise, a shower of gold pieces fell as if from the air, resounding upon the marble pavement, and caused a contest and commotion amongst the passers-by.

Several times this wonder was repeated in different places, at some distance from each other. It is not difficult to infer that this feat was the work of the retreating Will-o'-the-wisps, who, having extracted the gold from the limbs of the mutilated King, dispersed it abroad in this joyous manner.

The covetous crowd continued their contentions for some time longer, pressing hither and thither, and inflicting

wounds upon each other, till the shower of gold pieces ceased to fall.

The multitude at length dispersed gradually, each one pursuing his own course; and the bridge, to this day, continues to swarm with travellers, and the temple is the most frequented in the world.

JOHANN KARL CHRISTOPH NACHTIGAL ["OTMAR"]

(1753–1819)

LOCAL POPULAR TRADITIONS FROM THE SOUTH SIDE OF THE HARTZ

JACOB NIMMERNUCHTERN, OR, JACOB OF THE BOWL

(Translated by THOMAS ROSCOE)

JACOB, spite of his name, was once a tight and tidy thriving rustic, who flourished in a small hamlet of Thuringen, possessed of an inheritance that had gone down from father to son, through a long line of ancient villagers. Stout and well-built as a castle wall, of irreproachable reputation, quiet, husbandly, and laborious, he was loved and respected by all his neighbours, until a fearful reverse came across him, and no robber knight was ever so dreaded as he. By the oppression of the young Lord Guy, a second Nebuchadnezzar in his way, he was driven from house and field, and from a friendly open-hearted landsman, became a wild, drinking, swearing, and tearing tyke; finally a fierce avenger of his wrongs, who steeped his hands in blood. His adventures will afford all ranks of people an instructive lesson.

One day as the industrious Jacob was yoking his corn-wagon for the last time, to go to field, he heard his great house-dog Packan (Holdfast), a very trusty and serviceable hound, barking violently in the road. He hastened out, with a cudgel in his hand, and saw his noble dog sinking

under the grip of two others as large as himself, until Jacob smiting them hard with his staff, his own dog fought himself loose, and even boldly pursued his enemies. But in the same instant appeared the young Lord Guy, with a whole pack of hounds and a number of followers, all swarming round him, just as his cruel neighbour Maria shouted to Jacob to take care, and then, informing his lord that he was pursuing the dogs, bestowed her malediction upon the whole race of boors. The inoffensive Jacob was surrounded, and cruelly beaten for having driven off the hounds. After this he was dragged half dead to the castle of the savage man, who inflicted the pretended punishment with his own hands: the castle was situated in the woods, about a mile from the village, belonging also to this hunting lord.

It was in the time of the club laws, when the too-powerful knights, taking advantage of the impotence of their princes, acknowledged no laws, loudly proclaiming their rights but never their duties, while the oppressed tenant obtained no kind of right, which was thus monopolised by the landlord. As bondsman and a responsible character, the latter was courted and respected by the real possessors of the soil, and could do anything with the poor rustics at pleasure. Accordingly Jacob's case was heard, and commiserated by none; none undertook his defence; and five months he continued to languish in prison, a prey to cold, hunger, and vermin. His dungeon was called the hound-lock, though this appropriated to human wretchedness; a piece of mouldy bread was the highest happiness it afforded.

Yet worse than all this were the insults of the knaves who caught the contagious example set them by their master. To these were added the bitter and heartless jibes and mockery of the knight's only daughter, the vain and haughty Catherine. She was thus the favourite of her father, rode with him every day to the chase; and whenever she came opposite to Jacob's dungeon, which had a small grated window in the iron door, to admit air and food, she en-

couraged one of the fiercest hounds to run at the prisoner, as he stood at the door, inquiring with an insulting laugh, seconded by Lord Guy himself, if the hound wished to drive the hounds away, alluding doubtless to Jacob's pursuit of the lord's two hounds with his dog, at the time he was secured. Often, too, she would ask him how he would like to have such a lady for his wife, or for his son's, as they seemed to think the poor Maria hardly good enough; besides many other sarcasms equally unbecoming her sex and youth.

Jacob bit his lips and said nothing; only once when she threatened to have him cast down the precipice round the castle, in order not to deprive the hounds of their bread, he felt a sudden transport of indignant revenge, and vowed to break his prison-house, feeble, naked, and worn down as he was. On a stormy night, towards the end of winter, he first began to make an attempt upon the old, and in some part, dilapidated walls, which by repeated and incessant exertion at length gave way. He crept through the opening on his hands and knees, with much difficulty cleared the castle ditch, which was covered with ice, and at length found himself free.

But whither to turn his steps? There was no magistrate to whom he could apply for refuge from the oppressor, who would redress his wrongs; there was no justice for such as he. His only chance of escaping from the vengeance of Lord Guy and his haughty daughter lay in speedy flight, far from his paternal village; for he fancied he saw streaks of light, and heard shouts and the baying of the hounds in pursuit of him. Years must pass over his head ere he ventured to indulge the thought of returning to his home, when the vengeance of the savage lord should be laid asleep, or he himself laid asleep with his fathers.

He could not, however, resist his desire to behold for the last time his once-loved home, his wife, and his two sons, both stout young men, of whom he had not heard a word during his long captivity. He should weep and rejoice with

them over his wrongs and over his escape; he should warm his stiffened limbs in a human dwelling; clothe himself in clean garments, and then, armed with a single bear-spear, fly to the forest.

Guided only by the light of the moon, he speedily reached the village, and in a few minutes stood with beating heart before his own fields, but heard neither the baying of his faithful hound, in reply to his calls, nor the sound of a human voice. He cleared the hedge in an agony of impatience; ran forward, found his house door open, but neither wife, nor sons, nor any living thing to welcome him. All was empty and deserted; chair, bed, and table there were none—only the bare cold walls falling to pieces. Jacob shuddered, struck his forehead, and then threw himself upon the ground, where he lay buried in thoughts of agony and revenge for some hours. At length the bitter cold and gleams of coming day aroused him. He shook himself, doubting whether he still existed. He felt all round the walls, as if to ascertain that it was really his own dwelling. Almost frozen to death, he had nearly fallen as he again attempted to walk. With tottering steps he passed his deserted door, his garden, his little field, away into the open waste of the wide world before him.

Now he heard the well-known voice of the village watchman, crying *one*; and the first beam of hope lighted up his countenance. He heard the baying of dogs, and soon he distinguished that of his own faithful Holdfast. Jacob whistled; and soon the dog came bounding to his side, whining with delight at this sudden appearance of his master. Jacob caressed his old half-starved companion, and hastened with bolder step to gain the mountain; for he was no longer quite alone, his faithful dog would not desert him.

Before sunrise he already found himself in a wild, secluded spot, where he discovered a still more secret and secluded cavern, at the foot of Rothenburg, upon the Kyffhâusen

hills, already familiar to him, before his captivity, even from his boyish years, for their hiding-places. It was now day, and Jacob stretched his weary limbs to warm them in the sun, and for the first time during seven months beheld the trees and fields under the refreshing light of heaven.

Soon the pangs of hunger assailed him, and his poor dog looked up in his face wistfully. By chance he cast his eye upon an old mendicant, winding his way down the hillside into the road, apparently with a well-filled wallet. Jacob had never solicited bread in his life, though he had often distributed it to others; but now he hastened with his dog down the mountain. He found the old beggar-man lying down on the roadside, hailed him, and entreated he might have a piece of bread, for his dog and for himself. The beggar turned his head round at his voice, and in his features Jacob recognised, with more than a father's delight, his oldest son, near five-and-twenty years of age. Both gave a shout of triumph at the same moment; they had met in spite of the malice and oppression of their enemy.

Jacob first gave his dog to eat, then devoured a few mouthfuls in silence; drank sparingly from the proffered flask, and beckoned his son, without speaking, to accompany him back to his cave. Yet he greedily listened to everything his son said, and on reaching the spot learned the full extent of his misfortunes.

Only a few hours after Jacob's capture, Lord Guy's overseers entered his house, and drove out his wife and sons, scarcely permitting them to take with them enough to shield them from the weather. An envious neighbour possessed himself of his little ground, one who had formerly been his lordship's groom, and was engaged to marry one of the village girls named Maria. But Lord Guy, out of his mere tyrannical pleasure, resolved that Jacob's son, who was attached to one of the loveliest and most virtuous maidens in the village, should wed the girl he did not like—Jacob's avowed enemy, by whose family she supposed herself

slighted. And on Jacob's capture she was permitted to seize his corn and goods, as a penalty for the lord's hounds, that had been bitten by Holdfast. On the following day, as the proud lord's daughter, Catherine, rode through the hamlet, she took a fiendish pleasure in permitting her minions every licence and ill usage towards Jacob's wife and his son's intended bride. "Both fell victims," continued Jacob's son, biting his lips till the blood sprang, "to our fierce maligant destroyers; my mother died three days after you disappeared, and my—my——" He could not pronounce her name, he drew his hand over his eyes, he gasped for breath. "She too followed her within two months afterwards to the grave. My brother Kurt has enlisted in a troop of lancers; but my enemies were nearer at hand, and I turned a beggar."

Jacob started and groaned as his son brought this sad story to an end; he threw himself on the ground, gnashed his teeth, but spoke not. Again he rose and gazed wildly round, cursed Lord Guy and all his race in his secret heart, but could not speak.

Absorbed in thought, he at first determined to take his own life, which the next moment became dear to him in the hope of revenge. Days were spent thus, for his despair was yet too strong to permit him to decide upon any prudent plan, though he swore that his revenge should be dreadful.

In the meantime, Friede was employed in begging; and one day he returned with an account that Lord Guy and his followers were all up in chase of them; that their cave was no longer safe, for that their enemy had sworn to beat up all Rottenberg and the Kyffhâusen hills on the following morning. This roused Jacob, and ere nightfall he was on his way with his son and dog towards the still darker and deeper fastnesses of the Hartz, near Stoltberg; and thence in a few days he pushed forward into the thick, and then impenetrable mass of woods by Lora. Here, after long wanderings, he fixed upon a safe abode which might defy whole years of

painful pursuit and researches on the part of their enemy.

Between the mountain heights of Lora and the solitary hamlets of Wûllferoda and Lollstâdt there lies, surrounded by dark thickets, and overgrown with thorns, a deep rocky glen, on either side of which there open frightful precipices, where none but the experienced guide dare venture to pass over the narrow ledge which separates them. At the other end of the fell he found a steep cliff, upon reaching the summit of which, with difficulty, there appeared two spacious cavities, through which was a passage of some feet wide, communicating with another line of rocks below. The remote part of this secret defile opened upon a wide chasm thick grown with bushes, on one side of which was the entrance to a smaller cavity leading to another larger cave. These last were then unknown, even to the oldest inhabitants of the district of Lora, and the foot of man has since rarely ventured to enter their defiles, though the mountain is now less wild and woody and the paths are more apparent than of old.

Here Jacob resolved to take up his abode; hither his son Friede brought their daily provisions, tools of various kinds, and new clothing. His father in the meantime broke in Holdfast to his new destination, cleared a footpath along the ridges of the cliff, and dreamed of revenge. "Curses on the tyrant Guy! was his wakening thought; curses on all these castle rulers who trample their tenants under the corn they grow!" was his sole evening prayer. He was long at a loss how to frame his scheme of vengeance; yet he persevered and cast about on all sides for further assistance to promote it. If he slackened, an inward voice seemed to rouse him afresh, in the name of all the wrongs perpetrated upon his wife and children, and he often added fuel to his fire by drinking. His son was ever welcomed when he returned with the strongest liquors, and he entreated him to bring more to hoard up against their future wants. And Friede

continued to beg from house to house, often obtaining wine or brandy from the more charitable, on the plea of providing medicine for a sick father, who was sinking fast under a lingering disorder in a wretched hovel in the woods. But as Friede so frequently preferred the same prayer in behalf of strong liquors for his aged father, the neighbouring people at length christened the invisible old beggar by the name of Nimmernuchtern (Old Swill-Bowl).

When Jacob found that he had now obtained provision sufficient for some months, he sent his son forth again, with a command that he should not return without his brother Kurt, from whom he expected additional support and courage in his plans; and he remained with his hound Holdfast, alone. For he had concluded to become a robber, in order the secure vengeance; as he found he could never bring down his proud spirit to beg his bread.

Better to accustom his powers to such a task, he began, with the help of his bear-spear and his trusty hound, to support himself solely on the flesh of wild animals. To ease his impatience for entering on his great work of vengeance, he fell upon the flocks and herds of the nearest castles and cloisters, insomuch that he shortly became, with the help of Holdfast, the pest and terror of the country round. For the dog soon took a delight in hunting the flocks himself, frequently bringing numbers of them so near the robber's quarters that he could easily destroy them at night.

In order to lighten his labours and remove all chance of detection, he wrapped himself in a black frock and conducted his depredations at midnight. And for emergencies in which it was necessary to inspire dread, he prepared a large mantle of cow-hide, upon which he fixed a ram's head, the horns of which served for a mask to disguise his real features. In the jaws he placed a light obtained from old dead wood, which he knew how to make more vivid or to extinguish as he pleased. As he proceeded equipped in this manner, with his great black hound before him, that never

gave mouth, but rushed silent as death upon its prey, it was no wonder that he should be mistaken by the trembling hinds and villagers, in his black apparel, for the great adversary of light. All flew before him, and he never once had occasion to apply for assistance to his sheep's head with a fiery mouth.

When the people found, however, that the black demon did not actually devour them, they grew a little bolder; one or two even spoke to him at a distance, and declared that though he must doubtless be a devil, yet he was a very good-natured one of the kind. One dark night, Jacob overtook a shepherd in the woods, driving a dozen fat wethers before him. In a voice of thunder he called out, "Where are you going with them?" "To the Abbot of Elend," replied the trembling hind. At this Jacob blew fire out of his mouth, and said, "But I am the devil himself, and both Abbot and sheep are mine!" The shepherd crossed himself and prayed. Then Jacob added, "Oh, you say your beads, so I cannot touch you; but get along and tell the Abbot that his brother Satan has taken the sheep." At this proposal, though the poor fellow's hair stood on end, he demurred a little, "Ah, my good devil, be merciful, and give me at least a ticket to show my master and the good Abbot, or they will never believe me!"

"I say, tell the Abbot," replied the devil, "that he shall see me at his chamber window exactly at twelve o'clock to-night, and present him with a fine piece of roast beef in return." So the hind was fain to give his charge into the care of Holdfast, who drove them in the direction of the robber's cave, while the trembling shepherd proceeded to inform the Abbot and his flock of the misfortune that had overtaken his own, not omitting to deliver the devil's message, that he would pay him a visit that night. The poor monks were immediately roused from their beds, and all the monastery summoned to the Abbot's chamber; consecrated water was sprinkled all over, and the usual adjurations

against spirits were adopted, after which they awaited with no slight anxiety the arrival of the fatal hour. It came, and with it Jacob in his most imposing costume: his black cow-skin, crowned with the great ram's horns, spitting fire, while his large swart hound stood by. In a few minutes the devil disappeared, which the good monks attributed to the efficacy of the holy water, which the exorciser did not spare. No one ventured to partake of the roast beef which he left behind him, and it was given to the hounds and ravens.

Jacob had now recovered his former strength, or rather it was doubled, by this new mode of life; and he now sighed for more important undertakings, which might tend to forward his ultimate views. He already aspired to mount horse, and the noble hunter belonging to the lord's proud daughter came directly into his mind, as he used to see him prancing past the gate of the prison. Black as night, and swift as a dart, he had been long accustomed to the mountains, and he promised himself a grand triumph when the proud lord and his daughter should behold him mounted upon their favourite steed and galloping off.

About midsummer he disguised himself in the dress of an old woman, and sought the neighbourhood of the Castle. It was not long before he beheld his deadly foe mounted upon her black charger, and her savage father riding by her side. Away they rode through the fields and gardens and standing corn of the tenants, leaping and breaking through the copses and hedges. At twilight on the third day of his watch he found his opportunity: he saw the bold lady give her horse to two grooms; he was covered with foam, and the grooms led him into an open meadow to walk him round till he was cool. In going to bring corn and water, they left him tied up to a tree near the wood; and it was now the old woman crept softly towards the spot, caressed the noble steed, caparisoned him with the saddle and bridle that lay near, mounted his back, and made at full speed for the woods of Lora. He had quite disappeared before the grooms

returned, who, imagining that he had broken his hold, searched all the neighbouring places for him in vain. The indignation of the lord and his daughter was terrific; but while all were busily employed in making inquiries, Jacob had time to reach the woods, the mountain, away along the well-known path up the cliff, nor stopped till he found himself at the entrance of his spacious cavern. Here he had made ample provision for the noble steed; and his sole care for days afterwards was to attend him, to accustom him to the precipitous paths, before which he at first trembled, and to train him to bear a part in the great task he had at heart. In two months he succeeded in training him so well, and using him to every call and motion of his hand, that he would ascend the steep without a rider, stand still at a word, lie down and spring up again at pleasure, and scour the whole mountain round, like his master.

The day now drew near, according to Jacob's reckoning, when just a year before he had been beaten and imprisoned by the savage lord. He resolved to celebrate this anniversary by appearing before him and his haughty daughter, mounted upon their favourite hunter. For this purpose he arrayed himself in his best attire—the best he had ever worn when a tenant—and, mounting his horse, rode away towards the lord's Castle. When arrived opposite to it, he blew loudly an old hunting-horn which he had found in the woods, and the strange tidings were quickly brought to the proud inmates' ears that a boor had appeared riding the Lady Catharine's steed and blowing upon a horn, high treason throughout the whole of Lord Guy's domains. But they had hardly caught a glimpse of Jacob, who curveted in great style before the Castle, before he had again disappeared, calling aloud to some tenants near him that Jacob would pay them another visit in the morning. It came, and found Lord Guy and his followers all ready mounted and ready for pursuit. Jacob appeared, their bloodhounds were let loose, but only a few of the first riders kept Jacob and his dog in

sight, and lost him on the skirts of the woods near Lora. Some of the strongest hounds, however, pursued him to the very entrance of the cavern, where Holdfast, who had grown wild and fierce, fell upon them like a tiger, and while engaged with them his master approached with his bear-spear and put most of them to death.

It soon spread through the country round that Jacob had entered into a league with the devil, and could make himself invisible at pleasure. But Lord Guy regarded him as a human enemy, whom he swore to pursue unto death, careless how far he perjured his soul. Many an ambush did he lay, and one day in particular, smarting with rage under some fresh insult he had received, his finest hounds having disappeared, he awaited him attended by more than twenty horsemen who had taken the same oath, concealed half-way between the Castle and the woods. This time Jacob had a very narrow escape. He imagined his enemy to be much farther off, and was engaging in teaching his horse to spring forward, and run towards him at the sound of the horn, and to make a charge as if in battle. Suddenly he heard the deep baying of his hound announcing his foes, and he had with difficulty sprung on his saddle before his enemies rushed forward and tried to surround him. Still he was too quick, for he gained upon the foremost who had at first brushed close up to him and imagined they had him safe. Again he disappeared in the woods of Lora, though the lord and two more still keenly pursued the track. They held on. Jacob was again in view, nearer than before. They gained upon him, they reached the foot of the cliff, within a few yards of him; when up went his horse like a hawk, and seemed to be swallowed up in the centre of it! "There," cried George, his lordship's favourite squire, "did I not say he was invisible? The world ends here; they may follow him into the next who list, with the help of a broken neck. For one I will not serve in the devil's kitchen." But his lord heard him not; he spurred his steed up the heights; it stumbled,

threw its rider, and then followed Jacob's steed down into the cavern. He thus became possessed of a good saddle, of which he was greatly in want.

From this period no one ventured to follow Jacob into his stronghold. All drew back at the sight of the yawning precipice; and for a period he was permitted to pursue his devastations among the neighbouring herds belonging to both cloisters and castles, on horse and foot, sometimes arrayed like the devil, and accompanied by his large black dog, that drove them together and attacked or tore them at his beck. He particularly lessened the number of his enemy's flocks, and none of the shepherds dared to keep their ground when they beheld Jacob in the devil's shape at a distance. Yet this was insufficient to satiate Jacob's revenge: its shafts must reach the heart of the haughty lord himself and his daughter. Hitherto he had haunted only the outskirts of the Castle; he now determined to penetrate its walls. He shortly ascertained that Lord Guy had never left his couch since the day he fell from his horse. Jacob paused. "No," he said, "he would not disturb a sick man upon his bed; he would turn his attention to his heartless and cruel daughter." On a misty autumnal night, dimly lighted by a waning moon, he stood before the haughty Catherine in his devil's form; for while a prisoner he had discovered the exact situation of her apartment Fiercely did he awake her, and her honour now paid the forfeit of her former bitter sarcasms and cruelties. "You have kept your promise," he then exclaimed, "and I am avenged. This day two years, with bitter mockery, you vowed you would become my wife. I am Jacob, he whom you called the hound and threatened to precipitate from the Castle heights!" The next instant he had disappeared.

Yet even this disastrous scene would have been forgotten, except from feelings of vengeance, by the relentless and unfeeling Catherine, could she have kept it secret. But Jacob recollected the fate of his wife and his son's betrothed

wife; their wrongs were known, and he published the disgrace of the high-born, cruel Lady Catherine. It was bruited abroad, and the proud lord heard it. His rage knew no bounds, but as it could not reach the criminal, it turned upon his daughter, whom he now detested as much as he had formerly loved. He accused her of having been seduced, of having kept it secret from him, and wilfully brought lasting dishonour upon his name. He was just on the point of having her immured in one of the Castle vaults for life, when she suddenly eloped with an old lover, no other than the husband of her father's mistress.

Towards the close of the ensuing winter Jacob's sons returned to their father's cavern, expert robbers. They had recognised each other in the troop of lancers, the French and the Swabians being then at war; and they rifled everything which as defenders of their country they were bound to protect. In this service they acquired as much villainy in one year as they could under their father in ten. They brought along with them two enormous black bull-dogs, which they had stolen from one of their most celebrated captains who had trained them up to man-hunting. Jacob related to them, how far his revenge had transported him; and was not a little astounded when his sons assured him that all he had communicated to them were mere trifles, the result of intoxication, and that in fact he was then so tipsy as hardly to be able to speak. They told him of the far more glorious licence permitted in war; of excesses not only permitted but lauded and rewarded; such as burning, spoiling, razing cities, destroying, deflowering, and the waste of all kinds of property, besides torturing, cruel deaths, etc., the daily employment of our lancers.

At first Jacob shuddered as he listened to them, but by degrees his repugnance vanished, and encouraged by his sons, he determined to imitate upon a small scale what he heard of on the grand theatre of the world.

Friede and Kurt soon provided themselves with horses

and arms in the best style of the times. Wherever the six ferocious outlaws, three human and three brute, all black as night appeared, they were called by the surrounding peasants, "the *swart gang riders*." In the meantime, Lord Guy had recovered from his fall, though he ventured not beyond the precincts of his Castle, having heard that Jacob had sworn to have his life. In order to rouse the lord of the forest from his lair, the swart gang set fire to the old wood round the Castle, determined to bring their enemy into the open field The flames consumed a portion of the out-buildings; still their master did not make his appearance, only a few days before this event he had died of rage and disappointed revenge.

Jacob's task of vengeance was thus accomplished, yet he now swore eternal hatred against all the neighbouring lords of the soil. The swart gang soon became the terror of the surrounding country, though they neither destroyed nor injured the peasants, but feasted upon the herds and flocks of the nobles, and frequently set fire to their barns and corn-fields. Whole districts were up in pursuit of them, but all to no purpose. Long did the secret cavern in the heart of the cliff, which concealed these night troopers, remain undis-covered. For the chief part of their pursuers held them in such awe as to imagine that they must either be demons or in league with the devil, though the peasantry residing nearer them conjectured the real truth, declaring that no other than the banished family of the Swill-bowls were the leaders of the swart gang. But these last were not displeased at the appearance of this scourge of the more powerful landowners, which inflicted no sort of injury upon the people, opposing itself to the tyranny and oppression of the stewards who for centuries had considered the property of their poorer neighbours as their prey. Many regarded it as a judgment from heaven, which inflicted such kind of retaliation upon the heads of their masters.

In time, however, Jacob and his sons, living on nothing

besides raw flesh and the strongest drink they could obtain, became cruel and ferocious as wild beasts, and instigated by fresh pursuits and provocations, they entitled their depredations by the name of revenge, and, like their hounds, thirsted only for blood. At length they betook themselves to the high roads, particularly that leading through the Golden Green, levying heavy tolls upon all tradesmen and passengers, whom on the least resistance they did not scruple to despatch. But this public invasion of life and property speedily brought down upon them the incensed overseers and landsmen of the surrounding districts; of Quastenburg, Rottenburg, Kyffhaus, Lachsenburg, and many more. They formed regular troops against the black bandits; and these last, alarmed at their numbers, found themselves compelled to retire from the open roads into the recesses of the mountains. They again sought their ancient cavern, appearing only, arrayed like demons, during the night, but they could not always refrain from committing excesses, even against the peasantry of the Golden Green, whose houses they broke open.

Here, however, they met with some colonists from the Netherlands, who occupied farms in these fruitful valleys, and who had sense enough to recognise in these demoniac shapes mere human beings With their aid the swart gang were one day decoyed into a house, where they were at length taken. For they had taken care to construct a concealed pitfall, into which the half-intoxicated robbers fell, and were secured, to the great joy and triumph of the surrounding country.

Just before Jacob's execution he was induced by the threats of his judges and the whole collected people to confess the place of his retreat. In it were found the robbers' three black horses bound to their cribs. And down to the present day does the half-dilapidated and choked-up cavern retain the name of the *Robber Swill-bowl's Stable.*

JOHANN KARL CHRISTOPH NACHTIGAL ["OTMAR"]

(1753–1819)

✣

LOCAL POPULAR TRADITIONS FROM THE GOLDEN GREEN

I

THE KNIGHTS' CELLAR IN THE KYFFHÂUSEN[1]

THERE was a poor, but very honest, contented, and merry kind of man, in the village of Tilleda, who happened to be giving a christening treat, for about the eighth time, to some of his neighbours. Desirous of showing all respect to the party at the christening, he set before them the best country wine he possessed, which being quickly dispatched, his guests seemed to be looking for a little more. "Go then," said the father to his eldest daughter, a young girl about sixteen years old, "go, and bring us some better wine from the cellar." "From what cellar, Father?" inquired his daughter. "What cellar, child?" repeated her father, merely in jest; "why, the great wine cellar belonging to the old knights upon the Kyffhâusen!"

With perfect simplicity, the young maiden took a firkin in her hand and proceeded towards the mountain. About middle way, seated in an old deserted path leading down

[1] The Kyffhâusen, or Kipphâusen, mountain commands a view of the Brocken, of the Golden Green, of that of Altern, Langherhâusen, Wallhâusen, Rosla, Holberg, etc. It takes its name from the old castle, which still excites our wonder amidst its ruins. It is called Kyffhâus, a word that without doubt was equivalent to Streitburg with the ancients. Kiff-machen, *i. e.* to fight, to quarrel—Germanice, Streiten, Zanken, which has also been turned into Keifen. At the foot of this immense mountain are situated the little city of Kelbra, and the villages of Tilleda, and Sittendorf, both mentioned in this tradition.—OT.

towards the spot, she found an aged housekeeper dressed in a singular quaint fashion, with a large bunch of keys hanging at her side. The young woman paused, not a little surprised at the sight; but the old lady inquired of her very kindly whether she had not come to fetch wine from the knights' cellar? "Yes, I am," replied the timid girl, "but I have got no money." "Come with me," said the old housekeeper, "you shall have it for nothing; and better wine than your father ever bought in his life." They both then proceeded along an old deserted road, the old lady inquiring very particularly by the way what the appearance of things then was in Tilleda—who was alive and who was dead. "Once," said she, "I was as young and pretty as thou art, before I was kidnapped and carried underground by the knights, or rather night-riders, who stole me away from the very house that now belongs to thy father. Shortly before this they had also seized four young ladies of these parts, who were often afterwards seen about here, on their four richly caparisoned steeds. They were entrapped and carried off in open day by these mountain knights, as they were coming from church at Kelbra. They made me, as I grew older, into the housekeeper, and entrusted me with the keys of the cellar, which you see I still wear."

By this time they had reached the cellar door, which the old housekeeper unlocked. It was a fine spacious cellar, and on both sides it was well laid out with rows of vats and butts. Most of them were either quite or more than half full; and broaching one of them with great dexterity, she took the little firkin and filled it up to the brim. "There," she said, "take that to your father, and whenever he may happen to be giving a treat, you may come again; only see that you tell no one, besides your father, where you have it from. And moreover take heed that you sell none of it, nor give it away, for in neither case will it be worth anything at all. If any one venture hither to obtain wine for sale, let him be warned, his last bread has been baked: now go!"

So the girl returned with the wine to her father, and the guests found it excellent without knowing anything as to whence it came.

Henceforward as often as there was a party invited to the house Isabel went to fetch wine in the little kilderkin from the Kyffhâusen. They did not, however, long continue to enjoy the benefit of it; the neighbours began to wonder where the poor gentleman met with such excellent wine; none equal to it in the country. The father would inform nobody, nor would Isabel betray the secret.

Unluckily just opposite to them lived the landlord of the village inn, who dealt as largely as he could in adulterated spirits. He, among others, had also had a taste of the knights' wine; and thought he to himself, "My friend, you might mix this with ten times its body of water, and sell it for good wine still. Where the devil can you contrive to get it from?" He resolved to watch; and he followed the daughter as she went for about the fourteenth time with her little firkin towards the Kyffhâusen hills. He hid himself, and saw her come the exact way from the old cellar, with her firkin quite full, shortly afterwards. Accordingly, next evening, he set out himself, having first rolled into a little cart one of the largest empty barrels he could find, intending to fill it with the same precious kind of liquor. He thought it would be easy to convey it downhill; and he made a vow to return every night until the cellar became empty.

As he approached the spot where he had marked the path the day before, the sky suddenly began to grow dark and lowering. The wind rose, and whistled portentously of the gathering rain, which soon fell in torrents. The tempest carried him and his hollow tub from one side of the road to the other. At last down the hill he went, and continued to fall deeper and deeper, until he finally found himself lodged in a burial vault.

Here there appeared an awful procession before his eyes; a regular funeral, with a bier hung with black, and his wife

and four neighbours, whom he recognised easily enough by their gait and garments, following in its wake. At this sight he very naturally fainted away; and on recovering, some hours afterwards, he still found himself in the dimly lighted vault, and heard right over his head the old familiar steeple bell of Tilleda striking twelve. Now he knew that it was the witching hour, and that he was there lying under the church and the burial ground of the village in a gloomy vault. He was certainly more dead than alive, and scarcely ventured to breathe.

But see! a monk now approaches him slowly down the narrow steps, open the vault door, and in perfect silence puts some money into his hand, and then, taking him in his arms, he laid him down at the foot of the mountain. It was a cold, frosty night.

By degrees the good host came a little to himself, and crept, without either wine or wine-cask, as far as home. It struck one just as he reached it; and he felt himself so unwell that he found he must take to his bed. In the course of three days he died, and the money which he had brought home, given him by the ghostly monk, was just sufficient to defray his funeral expenses, his wife and the four neighbours, as he had seen them, following him to the grave.

JOHANN KARL CHRISTOPH NACHTIGAL ["OTMAR"]

(1753–1819)

***

II

PETER KLAUS THE GOATHERD

IN the village of Littendorf, at the foot of a mountain, lived Peter Klaus, a goatherd, who was in the habit of pasturing his flock upon the Kyffhâusen hills. Towards evening he generally let them browse upon a green plot not far off, surrounded with an old ruined wall from which he could take a muster of his whole flock.

For some days past he had observed that one of his prettiest goats, soon after its arrival at this spot, usually disappeared, nor joined the fold again until late in the evening. He watched her again and again, and at last found that she slipped through a gap in the old wall, whither he followed her. It led into a passage, which widened as he went into a cavern; and here he saw the goat employed in picking up the oats that fell through some crevices in the place above. He looked up, shook his ears at this odd shower of corn, but could discover nothing. Where the deuce could it come from? At length he heard over his head the neighing and stamping of horses; he listened, and concluded that the oats must have fallen through the manger when they were fed. The poor goatherd was sadly puzzled what to think of these horses in this uninhabited part of the mountain, but so it was, for the groom, making his appearance, without saying a word, beckoned him to follow him. Peter obeyed, and

followed him up some steps, which brought him into an open courtyard surrounded by old walls. At the side of this was a still more spacious cavern, surrounded by rocky heights which only admitted a kind of twilight through the overhanging trees and shrubs. He went on, and came to a smooth shaven green, where he saw twelve ancient knights, none of whom spoke a word, engaged in playing at ninepins. His guide now beckoned to Peter in silence to pick up the ninepins and went his way. Trembling in every joint, Peter did not venture to disobey, and at times he cast a stolen glance at the players, whose long beards and slashed doublets were not at all in the present fashion. By degrees his looks grew bolder; he took particular notice of everything round him, among other things observing a tankard near him filled with wine, whose odour was excellent. He took a good draught. It seemed to inspire him with life; and whenever he began to feel tired of running, he applied with fresh ardour to the tankard, which always renewed his strength. But finally it quite overpowered him, and he fell asleep.

When he next opened his eyes he found himself on the grass-plot again, in the old spot where he was in the habit of feeding his goats. He rubbed his eyes, he looked round, but could see neither dog nor flock. He was surprised at the long rank grass that grew about him, and at trees and bushes which he had never before seen. He shook his head and walked a little farther, looking for the old sheep path and the hillocks and roads where he used daily to drive his flock; but he could find no traces of them left. Yet he saw the village just before him; it was the same Sittendorf, and scratching his head he hastened at a quick pace down the hill to inquire after his flock.

All the people whom he met going into the place were strangers to him, were differently dressed, and even spoke in a different style from his old neighbours. When he asked about his goats they only stared at him, and fixed their eyes

upon his chin. He put his hand unconsciously to his mouth, and to his great surprise found that he had got a beard, at least a foot long. He now began to think that both he and all the world about him were in a dream: and yet he knew the mountain for that of the Kyffhâusen (for he had just come down it) well enough. And there were the cottages with their gardens and grass-plots, much as he had left them. Besides, the lads who had all collected round him answered, to the inquiry of a passenger what place it was, "Sittendorf, sir."

Still shaking his head, he went farther into the village to look for his own house. He found it, but greatly altered for the worse; a strange goatherd in an old tattered frock lay before the door, and near him his old dog, which growled and showed its teeth at Peter when he called him. He went through the entrance which had once a door, but all within was empty and deserted. Peter staggered like a drunken man out of the house, and called for his wife and children by their names. But no one heard him, and no one gave him any answer.

Soon, however, a crowd of women and children got round the inquisitive stranger with the long, hoary beard, and asked him what it was he wanted. Now Peter thought it was such a strange kind of thing to stand before his own house, inquiring for his own wife and children, as well as about himself, that, evading these inquiries, he pronounced the first name that came into his head: "Kurt Steffen, the blacksmith?" Most of the spectators were silent, and only looked at him wistfully, till an old woman at last said: "Why, for these twelve years he has been at Sachsenburg, whence I suppose you are not come to-day." "Where is Valentine Meier, the tailor?" "The Lord rest his soul," cried another old woman, leaning upon her crutch, "he has been lying more than these fifteen years in a house he will never leave."

Peter recognised in the speakers two of his young neigh-

bours who seemed to have grown old very suddenly, but he had no inclination to inquire any farther. At this moment there appeared, making her way through the crowd of spectators, a sprightly young woman with a year-old baby in her arms, and a girl about four taking hold of her hand, all three as like his wife he was seeking for as possible. 'What are your names?" he inquired in a tone of great surprise. "Mine is Maria." "And your father's?" continued Peter. "God rest his soul! Peter Klaus, to be sure. It is now twenty years ago since we were all looking for him day and night upon the Kyffhâusen; for his flock came home without him; and I was then," continued the woman, 'only seven years old."

The goatherd could no longer bear this: "I am Peter Klaus," he said, "Peter and no other," and he took his daughter's child and kissed it. The spectators appeared struck dumb with astonishment, until first one and then another began to say, "Yes, indeed, this is Peter Klaus! Welcome, good neighbour, after twenty years' absence, welcome home."

JOHANN KARL CHRISTOPH NACHTIGAL ["OTMAR"]

(1753–1819)

POPULAR LOCAL TRADITIONS FROM THE NORTH SIDE OF THE HARTZ

THE MONK OF CONRADSBURG'S TALE

THE monks of Conradsburg[1] were jolly, well-faring people, not overdone with hard work. This gave their great adversary the devil, however, a fair opportunity, a handle to work them by, which he did not neglect. Their novitiates only were subjected to labour, and for some years after taking their vows were compelled to restrain their passions, especially when they were observed, strictly within rule of the order. But as they gradually grew into power, and exercised some influence over the affairs of the monastery, they amply repaid themselves for this, their period of probation, by indulging all their wishes. Yet they were always ready prepared with the Lord's name in their mouth for every emergency; give them a quarter of an hour's preparation, and the day was their own.

In particular those who were selected to discharge the out duties of the establishment, to levy the quit-rents, fines, and contributions, found themselves in a very comfortable situation. They lived much according to their fancy, like free citizens, and deprived themselves of no kind of gratification. One of their chief characteristics was that of decoying

[1] Conradsburg was situated near Endorf and Ermsleben, in one of the most romantic and fertile districts of Germany, and was incorporated with the Prussian territories; but during the Middle Ages it was under the dominion of a large monastery.

simple women, who believed them, according to their own representations, to be the lords of church, power, service, and absolution.

Among these very lucky, self-complacent, pious men, who were either gracious or severe, according as they judged best, was also Brother Marcus, one of the most popular and reputed among their spiritual lords. He enjoyed the office of warder of the lands and forests, which extended many miles round the monastery. One of those woods lay close to Stangerode, and it is to this day called the Monk's Wood. Now as Marcus happened to have too sociable a taste to confine himself to the company of young trees, he so contrived to manage matters at an election, with the Abbot, as to be chosen to fill the office of gathering fees in some adjoining villages, finding this the most convenient method of forming such connections as he most approved. In this way Brother Marcus spent his time journeying from house to house, and tarrying long or short, just in proportion as he liked the treatment he received from the good housewives—sometimes a week, sometimes a month at a time

Among others whose acquaintance he thus cultivated was the young and sprightly wife of an honest man of Stangerode, named Hartung, whose house lay on the skirts of the monks' forests. Certain days in every month he was obliged to be absent from home, being then engaged in providing himself and his neighbours with salt, which he brought from Halle.

During some little time past Hartung found his wife Isabel quite altered. Once she had been a sharp, active, housewifely woman, and now she complained of taking the least trouble; all kind of work became exceedingly disagreeable to her; and instead of welcoming her good man home as usual, and sharing in all his labours, she fairly turned her back upon him; scolded him when he came in, and scolded when he went out. She began to lament her hard lot, the low drudgery to which she was consigned, and the little estimation in which her services were held. "Such

hands," she declared (they became softer and whiter every day), " were not made for labour." Her husband stared at her with all his eyes, and could by no means make out how she possibly became imbued with such maxims, nor what she meant. He was inclined to lay the blame upon some mischievous meddler; but he had no idea that he was so very near him.

In fact Isabel made the poor man's house so uncomfortable that he could no longer live with his wife and children, but went out and rambled round the country, full of vexation and dissatisfaction. In such a mood his brother-in-law, Hierscho, and his next neighbour Probst, one day joined him. At first poor Hartung wished to avoid them, and would not enter into discourse. But they who had for some time back heard a report of a bleating ghost, which haunted the monks' wood and made towards Hartung's court, had determined to watch, and plainly traced him into the house; and they now came to say that the source of all his sorrows was no other than Marcus, the monks' taxman. They proceeded to state that during his late visit to Halle they had twice seen a monk creeping upon his hands and knees at the back of Hartung's barn; that he concealed himself in some hazel bushes, and set up a long-continued bleating like a calf, to which Isabel replied by imitating the barking of a little dog, intended as a signal, and then opening him the door. Probst here added that he had vowed to be the death of Marcus, as he found he was laying snares for his two unmarried daughters, and had been heard to say that he should shortly have the younger of them in his power.

It was some time before Hartung could be brought to credit these charges against the holy man; but when he did he appeared equally ready to put the monk to death. On the 20th of November, Hartung seemed preparing himself for a fresh journey, and on the evening of the same day he learnt that Marcus, in consequence of these tidings, had

shown himself on the skirts of the monks' wood. Shortly after the hour of midnight he left his own court, but had hardly gone a mile before he turned into a shady part of Welbeck forest, well known to him, and joined his neighbours, already lying in ambush.

They had not waited long before they heard the bleating of a calf, which came nearer and nearer, and then the barking of a little dog. Soon by the light of the moon they saw their enemy appear in the shape of a dark animal, creeping upon its hands and knees, bleating and bellowing towards Hartung's house. The door opened, and the calf went in; and the three neighbours, leaving their hiding-place, proceeded to dig a large hole in one corner of the garden, under some thick hazel trees, and when they had finished their work they proceeded, arrayed in white sheets into the house. They entered by the back door, without being perceived, and hastening into his own chamber the good man found Marcus asleep in his wife's arms. She concealed herself under the clothes; but Hartung, scarcely giving the monk time to awake, hit him a blow upon the head with his axe, which killed him on the spot. He was immediately carried out and interred in the grave which they had just dug for the purpose.

Hartung then harnessed his wagon and proceeded very quietly towards Halle, in order to bring back his accustomed load, nothing having yet given rise to the least suspicion. The good monk, to be sure, was missing, and not to be found, in spite of the inquiries of the whole monastery. For he was just then in great request, and esteemed by the whole order as the most worthy brother that could be found, to fill the vacant office of kitchen and cellar master, which the next monastic election was to decide. In the meanwhile his brethren consoled themselves for his non-appearance by listening to the amusing histories which were quickly circulated of his nocturnal excursions and intrigues, to some of which he had doubtless fallen a martyr.

About the third day after the murder of poor Marcus, the whole village of Stangerode was excommunicated, and declared a place calculated only to inspire feelings of dread and abhorrence. For, of a truth, the bleating continued louder than before, nor did it haunt the monks' wood only; the hobgoblin got into the houses, and ran both at men and women; many of the inhabitants, and in particular Hartung and Isabel, were frightened out of their senses and their houses too, while others hastened to Conradsburg in order to bring a priest to lay the unquiet spirit of the calf.

The priest came, encountered the bleating Marcus in the wood, and with the help of holy water drove him before him. Still he could get him to proceed no farther than the hazel trees; there he kept his ground, in spite of all adjurations and sprinklings. At length, after long consultation, it was given out by regular notice that on St. Thomas's day there would be a solemn procession of the whole monastery towards the fatal village of Stangerode. The Abbot commanded strict search to be instituted, and particularly under the hazel trees. They began to dig, and there found the body of the slaughtered monk, with the instrument of his destruction, not Hartung, but Hartung's axe, buried at his side. The body was conveyed back in solemn silence to the monastery, where it was freshly interred with all due ceremony.

All Stangerode was now under the greatest alarm at having thus wilfully provoked the wrath of the Lord. It was in momentary dread, not without reason, of being destroyed by fire and brimstone, of being excommunicated, or swallowed up alive. But whether it were that in the good monastery of Conradsburg farther inquiry was judged inexpedient, as Fame with her thousand tongues had already bruited the matter far and wide, or whether the culprit could not be found, or that the holy brethren speculated upon filling up the empty spaces in the saints' and martyrs' calendars for future centuries with their own names; it is

certain that the upshot of their whole judgment upon the nefarious place resolved itself briefly into the following sentence:—

"Whereas one of the holy monks of Conradsburg, being officially engaged in the discharge of his public duties according to the rule of his order, has been scandalously and criminally interrupted, attacked and cruelly murdered, while in fulfilment of such trust, by some person or persons unknown:

"It is hereby enacted that the village of Stangerode shall, in consequence, be fined in perpetuity, in the penalty of a new cowl tax, and that each of the fourteen houses (all of which the place then consisted) shall be first merced in the sum of a silver penny. That such cowl tax shall be annually levied upon St. Thomas's day in a public assembly, and to be paid under penalty of one barrel of herrings and a cask of wine, for every minute that such payment is delayed after the hour of sunrise, and that such forfeits be brought in penitent procession by the inhabitants of Stangerode to the monastery of Conradsburg."

The spirit of brother Marcus was thus propitiated, he was avenged upon the wicked inhabitants where such a deed had been perpetrated, and from that day forth, St. Thomas's day, he no longer appeared in his real form, but merely in the shape of a dumb hound or a calf. And even to this day, though more rarely in proportion as infidelity begins to prevail, he still permits himself to be seen between the days of the 20th of November and 20th of December, by moonlight, either bleating like a calf or baying like a hound. But seers only can distinguish him; though all may plainly enough hear him bleat, and sometimes feel him too, like the burden of a hundredweight upon their shoulders. At other times he comes in the shape of a nightmare, and presses the poor sleeper down so heavily upon his couch that he can scarcely get his breath.

AUGUST FRIEDRICH ERNST LANGBEIN

(1757–1835)

SEVEN MARRIAGES AND NEVER A HUSBAND

(Translated by THOMAS ROSCOE)

ADELINE was the daughter of a rich French merchant; a young lady who, if not quite as prudent, was perhaps as beautiful as Penelope, and could number almost as many admirers soon after she had entered into her teens. In truth, she was a great favourite; and advocates, court retainers, members of parliament, officers, and general officers seemed to vie with each other for her good opinion; but they had, hitherto, all met with the same reception; namely, that flat little monosyllable, *no!* At length a handsome young officer of the name of Alson had the happy fortune to obtain her good graces, but her father still shook his head. He was of a good old family, he admitted, only he had hardly a stiver to bless himself withal, except what came out of the military chest; and why this should entitle him to a preference over so many wealthy and noble offers he was at a loss to account. M. Molinet, however, did not belong to that class of cruel fathers who boast of the right divine of tyrannising over their children, and by the combined effect of frowning and fuming, and fretting and petting, mixed with a little solitary confinement and low diet, bring their girls into a fit frame of mind to bear the matrimonial yoke along with some ugly, hateful-looking wretch whom they would otherwise, perhaps, have by no means admired. So, without making much ado about nothing, this sensible French father, after a few imprecations,

which helped him to recover his gaiety, no longer withheld his consent. "The young fools like one another," he said; "and the boy wants nothing but money, which, I dare say, he will allow me the honour to supply. By such means his valour will entitle him to a captain's commission at a jump; another and another, till he reaches a colonel's; and it will not sound amiss when the world, in my hearing, shall designate the commander of a whole heroic regiment with the dear name of son—the wealthy old merchant's son."

In a short while, Lieutenant Alson's promotion began, and kept pace with his father-in-law's prophecies of his valour. When he had risen a few degrees, Molinet agreed to celebrate his marriage with his daughter, in a magnificent manner. As the young lady, however, was only yet in her fifteenth year, and her father quite doated upon her, he had so contrived it, in consideration of her youth and his own old age, to have her company a year or two longer; and on the same morning that the ceremony was solemnised, his son's regiment received orders to march, and he peremptorily insisted upon its commander marching along with it, upon a foreign destination.

The parting scene was truly tender and romantic, but the old merchant conceived that he was doing his duty (for he believed that she was too young to encounter the trials of the married state); and it did not move him a whit. Alson's sole consolation was in the hoped-for termination of the American war, which would enable him to return speedily to his own country; while he had, at all events, secured his prize—barring the usual chances of being drowned, shot, captured, or knocked upon the head.

And truly his name seemed to have been entered upon the debit side of the Day-book of destiny; for though his regiment joined the party of the English colonists in their contest against the mother country, it so happened that our hero was wounded and taken prisoner by a troop of Indians, allies of the British forces, in the first engagement.

Fortunately, they neither sacrificed nor ate him, contenting themselves with the torture of curing him of his wounds, which, with their assistance, left him a cripple for life. This he found to be a serious impediment in the way of making his escape from the swift-footed sable chiefs, though he was over-persuaded to make the attempt by one of his fellow-prisoners. The latter was quick enough to secure his retreat, but the unlucky Alson was overtaken while limping at an extraordinary pace, in the hope of rejoining his young bride and his wealthy father-in-law, with the addition of enjoying a quiet pension for life. Poor fellow! he was caught when within a stone's throw or two of the American lines, and immediately compelled to limp his way back again, with an Indian spear by way of goad, pricking him in the rear. On his arrival he was thrown into a large wooden cage, with orders to be fattened, as soon as possible, for one of the chief's tables, whose stomach refused almost every other kind of food.

Meanwhile Victor, the young officer who accompanied him in his flight, under plea of extreme sickness and his late sufferings, obtained leave of absence, and proceeded back to his own country. During his captivity he had heard a great deal in praise of the beauty and accomplishments of Adeline, while conversing with the unfortunate Alson. Aware, at the same time, of her vast fortune, a thought now struck him on which he continued to ponder during his whole voyage home. He conceived that he might possibly be fortunate enough to supply Alson's loss; for he had little doubt but that the sable heroes would very quickly dispose of their prisoner, in such a way as to leave him no source of uneasiness on that head.

Taking this, at all events, for granted, and flattered with the idea of his future prospects, he hastened, with the rueful looks of an undertaker, to the house of M. Molinet, and without much ceremony regretted that he was the bearer of ill tidings. A little shocked, the good merchant began

to pull almost as long a face as his own. The wily Victor, wishing to make a still deeper impression, so as to introduce himself in the character of a comforter, entreated that he would not alarm himself; and drawing his hand across his eyes, at the same time heaving a few sighs, he observed that his poor friend Alson had unfortunately been scalped and murdered before his eyes by a party of wild Indians.

M. Molinet uttered an exclamation of horror that brought his whole household together, old and young. Victor was still singing his doleful dirge as they gathered round, and he next drew forth a packet of forged letters, in order to give a greater air of veracity to his story. This, however, was superfluous; no one offered to question the truth of his statements, while his well-feigned sorrow recommended him strongly to his new friends as Alson's companion and fellow soldier. Here he flattered himself that he had laid a good foundation for his future plans, and in a few days he repeated his visit, when he had the pleasure of being introduced to the lovely Adeline.

Mutual sorrow and sympathy in regard to the young soldier's fate drew them into conversation, and Victor was quite charmed with her manners, while her beauty surpassed his expectations. By degrees his person and language appeared equally interesting to Adeline, and not many months had elapsed before their acquaintance began to ripen into a more tender regard. M. Molinet, being satisfied that his connections were respectable, and not in the least aware of the stratagem which he had adopted in order more effectually to succeed in his views, was shortly afterwards prevailed upon to give his consent.

The mourning having at length ceased, Adeline cast aside her widow's weeds and gave her hand to the happy Victor, who now fancied he had secured the fair prize for life. But Fortune, that had hitherto shown herself so remarkably favourable, now, when he stood on the very brink of Paradise, began, like the vile jilt as she is, to change her tone. He

was much in the situation of a spoiled child when the careless nurse slips its leading-strings: he fell, not figuratively, but actually and heavily, as he was cutting too high a curvet in the plenitude of his satisfaction in the bridal dance. He fell on the smooth chalked floor, and disjointed one of his thighs: a compound fracture, which would require him to lie in one position for the period of one or two months. What a horrible contrast! the bridal chamber was turned into a sick-room, his bride became head nurse, and all his fondest hopes disappeared in surgical operations.

His recovery was equally tedious and vexatious, and before he grew at all convalescent another character appeared upon the scene. Victor felt not a little alarmed on learning that Clermont, another young officer who had been captured by the Indians, had just arrived in Paris. His first question on arriving at the hotel was respecting the residence of M. Molinet, and he did not long leave Victor in suspense as to the particulars of his escape and the fate of Alson. In fact he was the bearer of letters from the latter to his wife, and he was naturally somewhat surprised on hearing from his host that the lady had contracted a second marriage. He was still more astonished to find that Victor was the second husband; but he revealed nothing of what he knew to his host, being first determined to have an interview with the wily usurper of Alson's rights, of whom he knew enough, before delivering his letters. Victor lost all courage, and looked quite crest-fallen as Clermont was announced, and briskly followed up his name, with the familiarity of a former comrade, into the sick man's chamber. "Oh, Victor!" he cried, "what a wretch you are! what a piece of villainy you have committed against Alson! He is alive, poor fellow; and I have brought letters from him for his wife—I must go and deliver them."

"Alive?" exclaimed Victor, "Alson alive? Impossible! Why, he was overtaken and put to death by the Indians in my company, while we were trying to make our escape."

"Stop there, Victor. He was overtaken, but not killed; though he would have been, and eaten too, had it not been for a party of the colonists, who fell on the Indians during the night and rescued our friend from his perilous situation. But come, I must deliver my letters."

"For God's sake! my good Clermont," cried the wretched Victor, at the same time tumbling head foremost in his hurry to prevent him, "for God's sake, help me up—I fear I have broken my leg again;—I beseech you not to put the climax to my misery. Truly, take half of all I am worth, and do not betray me. Command me in everything for ever after; but do spare me; and try to raise me upon the sofa before Adeline comes in."

Touched with pity at his helpless situation, Clermont assisted the unlucky patient from the ground, who feigned a vast deal more pain than he really felt.

Meanwhile, Adeline, who had heard from one of the maidens that a stranger had arrived, and was then in her husband's room, and likewise hearing high words, ran, full of anxiety, to inquire.

Victor was now in momentary dread of beholding the fatal letter drawn from Clermont's pocket; but the latter was too magnanimous, and too much delighted at the sight of Adeline's surpassing charms and loveliness, to think of causing her any such alarm and unhappiness. It is true that he enjoyed the happy man's suspense and tortures, and would then burst out into an uncontrollable fit of laughter to see the rueful faces which he made, and which his lovely bride put to the account of his lame leg, no better for his fall. Clermont lingered long enough to catch the fascinating poison that lurked in Adeline's bright eyes; his soul was fired at the first interview; and it was clear that Victor's last sands of promised happiness and good fortune—most tantalising good fortune—were nearly run. He no longer felt so indignant as he ought at Victor's base conduct; he rather sighed more effectually to imitate it; and having,

like him, been in the habit of pleasing himself whenever he well could, a thought suddenly struck him to avail himself, as far as possible, of the information and influence which he possessed.

Adeline, pleased to observe that there seemed nothing unpleasant between the two gentlemen, as she had feared, soon after left the room. Clermont again turned to his companion with a portentous frown upon his brow: "I am thinking, my good Sir, that you have brought yourself into a very pretty dilemma indeed. Your situation is desperate; and besides, I never could reconcile it to my conscience to become the means of concealing your treacherous conduct from the parties concerned. I say, sir, too, that it would be ill discharging the trust reposed in me by our unhappy friend Alson in any degree to countenance so base a conspiracy against his peace. No, I am decided in the course I shall take: to deliver his letters, along with other proofs, showing that, though infirm, he is still in existence. The sole lenity which in such an affair I can be induced to grant, would be to postpone the communication until you were sufficiently recovered to be removed; and the sooner you can save yourself by flight, the better it will be. I can afford you no greater proof of my regard; for if you continue here much longer I shall, however reluctantly, be compelled to expose you to the world. Spare yourself the trouble of any farther entreaties—I cannot listen to them; I cannot consent to become accessory to so cruel an imposition."

Having come to this explanation, Clermont took his leave, leaving the unlucky patient in no very enviable state of mind. He was unable even to make his escape; and he lay ruminating all possible plans, either for counteracting Clermont's influence or for effecting an able retreat. It was in vain, however, that he beat his brains for a satisfactory solution of his difficulties. The only resource that offered itself to his choice seemed to be that of throwing

himself voluntarily upon Adeline's mercy, and relying upon the strength of her attachment for a happy termination of the business. Should he, however, be successful in his appeals to her tenderness and compassion, still he would have to encounter the storm raised by her incensed friends and her father, which in his present helpless situation would be doubly trying. At length, finding nothing that was likely to relieve him from his awkward dilemma, he resigned himself quietly to his destiny, desirous only of getting his head out of the scrape with as little damage as possible; and, wearied with conjectures, he fell asleep.

Adeline remarked that there was something or other pressing upon his spirits, and with a thousand endearing words she sought to discover the cause. But he only affected greater cheerfulness, and lavished fresh thanks and caresses for all the affection and devotedness which, he said, she had so generously shown him. By such means he removed her suspicions, and she regarded the assiduous visits on the part of Clermont only in the light of friendly inquiries after his friend's health. Entertaining, however, the designs before mentioned, it was his object not to permit Victor's health to get so fully established as to take a final and affectionate leave of his young bride; he must be removed suddenly and secretly. For this purpose Clermont now daily made his appearance with Alson's letters in his hand, which he held before Victor's eyes, while he threatened the unfortunate wight with instant exposure if he longer refused to quit the field.

This, after many vain appeals for pity, he was compelled to do. Under pretence of taking a first airing, Clermont provided him with a conveyance, and then destroyed those important documents which he had held up, like the angel's flaming sword behind our first parents, to drive the unlucky Victor out of Paradise. Having accompanied him some distance, Clermont received his parting letter for Adeline, and returned in the same carriage to M. Molinet's house.

"Where is Victor? what has happened?" was the first inquiry.

"He bids you an eternal farewell!" replied Clermont; "and you may rejoice that you will never behold his face again. His own letter will inform you that he basely deceived you; that he forged the account of Captain Alson's death, and married Adeline during his lifetime. I threatened to reveal his treachery, and he quickly decamped, well knowing that he was not legally united to your daughter, nor entitled to her person any more than to her fortune.

"Poor Alson, indeed, is since dead, but this does not in any degree diminish his guilt or ratify his marriage. It is now just three months since my friend died in prison, where we were both confined for above a year. 'Should you ever,' said he, 'be fortunate enough to reach our dear country, salute my excellent Adeline, my dearly beloved wife!' Shortly afterwards he breathed his last; and peace be to the ashes of my respected friend! He beguiled the hours of our imprisonment with his sweet and noble discourse, and he even watched over me, I may say, after his decease; for as they were carrying his remains out of the prison I contrived to make my escape."

At this account both father and daughter stood wrapt in astonishment, and in particular Adeline fixed her eyes in breathless wonder upon the ingenious inventor of so many fictions. He retailed them with so much ease and confidence, answered every question, and gave the whole fable so natural an air, as to carry conviction to their hearts, equal to anything that was ever felt for the truth of the Gospel.

The lovely bride of two absent husbands then expressed her lively gratitude to the intending third for his timely interference in rescuing her out of the hands of so base a character, while the good old merchant begged for the favour of his friendship, and more frequent visits.

But the artful Clermont checked his wishes for a short period, in order not to betray his own project. He called so very seldom that, being bent upon evincing their gratitude, they were obliged to send him formal invitations. In fact, so deeply was he smitten with the charms of Adeline that he was almost afraid of anticipating his views upon her, and tried to accost her with all the starched politeness of some grey-haired matron during his first visits. Yet he was handsome and entertaining; and Adeline, a little piqued at his excessive indifference, sought to thaw the icy region about his heart by her sunny smiles and glances, and a thousand delicate little attentions. He replied, however, very cautiously, though in such a way as showed he was quite sensible of her power, and feared to trust himself within the enchanted circle of her charms.

To smooth the way more effectually to his wishes, he next brought forward the agreeable intelligence of the rogue Victor's death. It was apparently under the sign manual and seal of the curate who had confessed him, during his last moments, stating how he had fallen sick at a little village as the curate was passing through; how he had received sacrament; and how he had died in peace and blessedness shortly afterwards. This account of his decease he, the curate, had been induced to furnish at poor Victor's request, which duty he had discharged after giving him decent interment.

Adeline was again free; and how happy that she was released from so awkward a kind of engagement! Of this the arch-traitor Clermont was soon assured by the manner of his reception; it was no longer difficult to perceive that his artful diffidence and constrained demeanour had pleaded his cause more effectually than, in such circumstances, his utmost assiduities could have done. The coldness of his manner gradually died away; he began to assume his real character; every day they grew more and more passionately attached to each other; and Adeline gave him her hand

with greater pleasure than she did to either of her other husbands.

A splendid banquet welcomed the happy pair from the altar; the guests made their appearance; and the afternoon was at length far advanced. The sound of a carriage was now heard advancing at a smart pace up the street, and it drew up at M. Molinet's door. "Ha!" cried the good host; "an idle guest, by Our Lady, but he drives briskly up."

All eyes were now turned towards the door; it opened; and, to the surprise of all the company, in rushed the deceased Victor, with his drawn sword in his hand, which he pointed with threatening gesture at Clermont: "Up, up, and defend your life!" he cried; at the same time dragging the astonished bridegroom with firm grasp out of the hall.

Every guest sat too much terrified at his ghastly appearance to interfere, feeling quite assured that it was wholly supernatural. So that, with the assistance of his servant, Victor had thrust the unlucky bridegroom into his carriage, and driven away with him, before anybody had sufficiently recovered his senses to think of a rescue.

When arrived a short distance from the city, Victor called to the coachman to halt, and bursting into a loud laugh, he said, "Well, friend, there are now two knaves instead of one, and one raven must not pull out the other's eyes. There would be little use in hanging ourselves, if others will save us that trouble, for what we have done. My object in carrying you off arises from the most disinterested motives: it will save you from a great deal of plague; for, as you were kind enough to bring me tidings of Alson, I have now to inform you that he is actually in Paris, and would speedily have fallen upon you like a thunderbolt, and sacrificed both his wife and you to his fury. We have both of us the best reason in the world for keeping out of his way; for he is already half-witted from the effect of his Indian adventures

and being fattened, during the course of a whole month, for the chief's table."

"I wish he had eaten him, then," exclaimed Clermont, in very ill-humour; "the fellow must have as many lives as a cat."

"So it seems! but we must wait patiently till the affair has blown over; and meanwhile seek some safe retreat, in a corner of the kingdom, and near a seaport, in case the madman should run desperate and proceed to extremities against us."

Now this was all a fresh tissue of lies, invented by Victor to revenge himself. So far from being in Paris, Alson had been taken prisoner during his voyage home, and was now passing his time in England. Having given out that he had left France under an assumed name, Victor, after parting with his rival, had returned, and kept a watchful eye upon all his proceedings. In order more effectually to screen himself, and to get his rival completely into his power, he permitted him to accept the hand of Adeline, and then seized upon him in the manner that has just been related. Clermont easily fell into the snare, and no longer ventured to think of retracing his steps to Paris, when he believed that Alson, whom he had disposed of in so summary a manner, had again appeared on the scene of action. Half-stupefied with the news, he suffered himself to be rolled away, as he had been taken, in his rich bridal apparel, without hat or gloves, and arrayed from head to foot in silk; while the lovely Adeline was thus deserted by her third husband—and left to reflect upon her wayward lot alone.

Such a series of unexpected occurrences almost turned the old merchant's head. He began to be alarmed lest they should afford a topic of scandal to the whole city, and after a short consultation with his daughter, he came to the resolution of quitting Paris and retiring into the country for a short time.

So, having settled his affairs, he proceeded, accompanied

by his daughter, about eighty leagues into the country, where he purchased an agreeable residence, and spent a whole year, more to his own, than to Adeline's satisfaction. So sudden and striking a contrast was too trying and too solitary, after the loss of three husbands, though she had already almost banished them from her mind. For no one any longer doubted the decease of Captain Alson, her first betrothed; while, in regard to both the others, it was currently reported, and in a short while generally credited, that they had fought a duel, and fallen by each other's hands. Since the night of their strange disappearance they had neither of them been heard of; until one day in a wood, at some distance from Paris, two bodies were found dreadfully mangled, and there seemed no longer any doubt of their being the two ill-fated lovers; at least such was the account that reached M. Molinet and his daughter. It was also stated that the bodies had been interred, after remaining above ground until their features were no longer discernible, and no persons coming forward to lay claim to them.

However, to set the matter at rest, M. Molinet sent for the chief witness who had given evidence on the inquest; and having received from him an account of the persons of the deceased, he found it agree in many points with his two sons-in-law, a discovery which so greatly delighted him that, in the height of his satisfaction, he cried out: "Aye, the knaves! you describe them to a hair; and both dead and buried, you say?"

With this consolatory assurance he hastened to his daughter Adeline, and they now began to visit with their neighbours and see a little more of the world; while they even talked of returning the ensuing winter to Paris. Before that period arrived, however, the old gentleman had been again solicited for his consent; his consent for the fourth time! and he gave it with much the same easy temper as on former occasions; only his daughter was this time to be united to a young nobleman, Baron Marly.

The marriage ceremony was performed without the slightest interruption. The feast and the dance passed pleasantly away, and the bridesmaids were already busied in disarraying the fair Adeline of her ornaments and jewels, when, as fate would have it, a long and loud resounding knock was heard at the hall-door, enough to throw a nervous patient into fits. It was just midnight too; yet one of the footmen had courage enough to open the door; and in stepped a shabby-dressed man with a wooden leg; and, limping as fast as he could along the hall, begged to be allowed an interview with the host.

The servant grinned at him over his shoulder, and said that it would be better to postpone it to the following day.

"No, my good friend, it will not," replied the stranger; "my affair will admit of no delay. I must see your master this moment."

But the man only stared and shook his head, as if in contempt of his request. Upon this, the stranger, flying into a passion, raised his crutch. "Go, thou base varlet, or I will break every bone in thy skin!" and the footman ran to acquaint his master with this very unseasonable visit.

M. Molinet made his appearance in his nightgown and slippers. With a presentiment of something wrong, he looked the stranger sharply in the face, as he limped towards him, with a black patch over his left eye and a great plaster on the other cheek. The good old host uttered an exclamation of alarm at the very sight of him.

"Who are you, sir?" he inquired in a subdued and quivering tone; "and what is your pleasure with me?"

"Alas! don't you know me," sighed the stranger; "don't you know your own son-in-law, Alson?"

Poor M. Molinet started back several yards at one bound, raised up his hands in perfect wonder, and then called out to a servant at some distance from them: "For God's sake run,—call my daughter and her husband; and make haste—make haste!"

"Nay, *I* am already here, Father," observed the one-legged man.

"Oh, unhappy wretches as we all are!" cried the poor distracted father of so many sons, pacing backwards and forwards, and looking ruefully up the staircase, to see whether they would ever come.

Baron Marly first made his appearance, attired in a rich and elegant undress, looking as proud and glorious as Mars himself just before he was caught with the lovely wife of ugly limping Vulcan: who could scarcely have cut a more sorry figure than the one-legged man now did. The Baron could not help smiling at the stranger, as he said:

"What are your commands with me, Father? I was just this moment retiring for the night."

"But I will take care that you never shall," cried the lame man; at the same time striking his crutch in most threatening style upon the ground.

"Is the fellow out of his senses?" returned the Baron, with a glance of contempt.

Poor M. Molinet was now quite beside himself. He trembled sadly, at the necessity he was under of introducing the gentlemen to one another, on this occasion. He did it, but it was with a very ill grace.

"Fine doings, indeed!" exclaimed the crutchman, again stamping his wooden leg, more fiercely than before, upon the ground. "It is lucky, however, that I am arrived in time to prevent this Baron from casting a stain upon my honour, and that of my family. You will please, Father, to show him to the very farthest chamber from my wife's and mine that you can find in the house; I shall keep strict watch on the outside."

At these words Baron Marly instantly mounted his high horse of noble blood, and replied, with an air of disdain: "Night watches, my good fellow, do not seem very well adapted to your present crippled condition, and I will spare you that trouble. As matters turn out, you are quite

welcome to your first bargain, with all the manorial rights and appurtenances thereto belonging. In fact, I shall be happy to make the transfer, by which you will help me to untie a knot which I was beginning to fear might chance to be tied too tight. For my part, I am a friend to freedom, and there are some of my relations at Court who will not be sorry to hear of what has happened, for truly I have had very little peace since my alliance with this very worthy family, because they imagined that henceforward I was about to unite myself with that less shining, but useful class of honest citizens. They solemnly declared that my marriage had raised an eternal barrier between me and them—between the city and the Court; and that they knew how to respect their own station, if I did not. This was a sad blow in the face of my escutcheon; and I should, doubtless, soon have died of mortification, had not this lucky incident restored me to my injured nobility and pride. This somewhat consoles me for the personal loss of a lady for whom I entertained the greatest tenderness and esteem. But I am no sentimental worshipper of sighs and tears. I entreat you, therefore, my dear M. Molinet, to break this little matter to your daughter—to present her with my parting regards, and wish her all happiness and good fortune. So farewell, gentlemen. If you have any commands to Paris, I shall feel most happy to be the bearer. There I shall take out a formal divorce, and so the matter rests." With an air of lordly nonchalance, he turned upon his heel, and left his father-in-law lost in astonishment at the strange situation in which he stood.

"Nay, let the nimble puppy run," cried the man with the crutch; "and cheer up, old gentleman. You see you have got me quite safe; I wish I could add quite sound; but, anyhow, safe home again. True, I am a bit of a cripple; but what of that? I am none of your noble impostors—I am Alson, your honourable son-in-law. I hope Adeline will not think the worse of me; though, I confess,

I do not much relish the thought of our first interview: better perhaps to put it off until to-morrow. You will thus have time to reconcile her to the change of partners; but as you seem rather weary and nervous, you had better yourself retire to rest, and let me, likewise, be shown to a chamber. To-morrow I will amuse Adeline and you with some account of my adventures in America. You will be much astonished, if not entertained. But for to-night, dear Father, not a word more—let us get a little rest."

M. Molinet, like one half moon-stricken, tottered out of the room. He replied not a word; and his son was obliged to shake him well by the shoulders and stamp his wooden leg before he could make him comprehend that he wanted to be shown to his chamber.

Just at this moment one of Adeline's maids came running to say that her young mistress had fallen into fits. She had heard the uproar, and insisted upon being instantly attired, in order to arrive in time to prevent any fatal consequences—having already lost two husbands, who had fallen a sacrifice to their mutual fury; but such was the tumult of her emotions that she fainted in the bridesmaid's arms.

Greatly concerned at this event, the cripple bridegroom observed that had he not unluckily been so shabbily dressed, and altogether cut so very dismal and forbidding a figure, with the patches on his wounds and his wooden leg—which might perhaps frighten her into fits again as she was recovering—nothing should keep him from her presence. "Besides, my crutch makes such a plaguey loud noise in walking, she might imagine some kobold or house-goblin was coming into her chamber. Such things she must get used to by degrees; so, my good girl, I must be content with thy recommending me most affectionately to thy sweet mistress, and here is my father-in-law will go along with you."

Poor M. Molinet, quite puzzled what to think or what to do, suffered himself to be led, like a man walking in his

sleep, into his daughter's chamber; while his son-in-law walked another way into his own.

At this moment, the Baron's servants having packed up his wardrobe and brought the coach, he was heard giving his orders respecting these two most important and favourite subjects of his thoughts; and then he rattled off along the pavement, in all the offended, yet newly recovered, dignity of his ancient house.

Adeline, on her side, again passed a lonely night, on the very day of her fourth nuptials, besides being half-frightened to death.

On the morrow of this eventful evening, M. Molinet's household was early in motion. The good host himself began at length to console himself with the idea that even a wooden-legged son-in-law was preferable to none, and hastened downstairs with a fixed determination to welcome him in a hearty and hospitable style. The latter, however, seemed to think more of a good night's rest than rising at an early hour to reclaim the hand of his beautiful betrothed The clock had already struck nine, breakfast was waiting, yet the sluggard showed no signs of appearance. He had not even rung his bell; and the old merchant, beginning to feel impatient for his first meal, waited and grumbled; until, declaring that he must be one of the seven sleepers, he ordered one of the servants to knock, and to knock hard at his door; for it was now near eleven o'clock, and the old gentleman, in momentary dread of an attack of his spasms, was fast helping himself to whatever came nearest to him. Before he had half done, however, the lackey came to inform him that he had knocked repeatedly at the lame gentleman's door, but had received no answer.

His master shook his head wistfully, and, ordering the servant to walk first, followed him upstairs and bade him enter the room; not liking the risk of receiving any farther shock, added to that of the former night.

So he stationed himself at the head of the stairs, and

called out to the man from time to time, "Now, John, is he asleep?" "No, sir!" "Is he awake?" "No, sir!" "What, is he dead, then?" "Oh no, sir, he is only gone—at least I cannot find him." "Gone!" repeated the merchant, advancing a little more boldly, "What, crutch, and leg, and all?" "No, sir; his leg is here; only it is nothing but a cork!" "Nothing but a cork!" repeated the old merchant. "Then I dare say he must have a stock of them, and it is that, perhaps, which makes him so light afoot. The scoundrel!—the base deserter! to think of running away from his own wife and father, the very morning after returning to them. Surely I am bewitched, or this is all a dream. It cannot be: I am perhaps too hard upon him to suspect him; he has, perhaps, only got up in the night and gone into the garden; and then been unable to find his way back into the right room. Do you run into the garden, John, and I will examine the other bedrooms; he must be somewhere—he cannot be gone: call Adeline, call all the women, and the men, and the children, about the place; bid them look sharp everywhere—he cannot be gone."

There was soon a general muster, and the house was searched from top to bottom; but he was neither in the garret nor the cellar: the new son-in-law was gone! At length, when it came to the old porter's turn to be examined, who kept the lodge gates, and just then came hobbling up, he declared that about daybreak a lame, ill-favoured kind of man, with black patches on his cheeks, most like a broken-down soldier, had ordered him to unbar the gate, as he was going to see after some of his luggage which was left at the next inn, but he said nothing about coming back.

With this gleam of hope M. Molinet despatched a messenger to the place, but no person answering the porter's description had been there.

The lovely Adeline sat pale and weeping in her chamber: until this trying moment she had borne her strange adven-

tures and vicissitudes with the sweet temper and patience of an angel; but this was too much. There was no affectation in her sufferings: her tears and sighs were genuine; for she had really loved Alson—he was her first choice, and she sank overpowered with grief, on learning this his second and more cruel loss.

Her father, little less affected at witnessing her grief, retired, with downcast looks and full of perplexing thoughts, to devise some method of proceeding, to his own chamber. The reader, however, shall not be left in the same dilemma; but shall forthwith be introduced behind the curtain of the mystery, as here follows: In the first place he need hardly be informed that those two arch-hypocrites and impostors, Victor and Clermont, were still in existence. In truth, they were far too interested and notorious villains to think of sparing the criminal law any trouble by honestly knocking one another's brains out; and, in fact, were on the best terms, for persons of their stamp. As fortune, too, would have it, M. Molinet, in retiring to the country, had settled not far from the place of their retreat, which they kept as secret as possible, no less from fear of Alson's return, than from that of being brought to account for having deserted their military duties. They were, likewise, enabled, from this spot, to observe the proceedings of M. Molinet, their father-in-law, and to learn whether the affair had at all subsided.

The report of the fourth marriage acted like poison upon their jealous and revengeful feelings; and not venturing, from a sense of mutual safety, to wreak them upon each other, they swore to prevent any other person availing himself of any advantage which they had forfeited themselves. With this view, they pitched upon a wily young mendicant, who in some degree resembled Alson, and who could assume any character, and, equipping him in the manner already stated, their base stratagem turned out completely successful.

About the period that Baron Marly forwarded a copy of his divorce to his father-in-law, the latter became aware of the species of imposture that had been practised upon him, owing to the recognition and the subsequent confession of the roguish mendicant himself. Still he did not betray his employers, and M. Molinet, supposing *them* to be deceased, was now more at a loss than ever what to conjecture on the subject.

Adeline, on her part, seemed inclined to make no farther adventures in the matrimonial lottery; while her father was more intent than ever upon finding a real and *bonâ-fide* son-in-law. Suitors again began to make their appearance, and he allowed her no peace, until she agreed to make a fresh choice, for the fifth time, in the person of the Marquis Gilles.

The marriage ceremony was fixed to take place at a country-seat at some distance, belonging to the new bridegroom Everything appeared in a good train; the day, the dinner, and the dance were all happily concluded. M. Molinet had himself seen to the security of all the doors and windows, and given orders to admit no more guests after that hour, be they who they would.

The house was just beginning to settle to rest, when, horrible to relate, a cry of fire was heard, and the room next the bridal chamber was found to be in flames. The Marquis ran downstairs half undressed, and disappeared through the front door. The fire was fortunately got under, but the bridegroom was no longer to be seen. What had befallen him no one knew; his destiny remained a secret; and all that could be gathered was that some countrymen had beheld a carriage driving with great rapidity from the Castle.

Two days of grievous anxiety elapsed, when a courier made his appearance with the following letter, and after its delivery instantly galloped away:—

"MADAM,

"Your bridals are surely bewitched, and some dragon guards the entrance of the bridal chamber. I am no St. George, and feel no inclination to run a tilt with the monster; very willingly making room for the sixth fool, as I am told, who takes a fancy for such an adventure.

"GILLES."

M. Molinet tore this precious epistle in a great rage, then ordered his carriage to the door, and taking his daughter along with him, ordered them to drive quick towards Paris. He left a letter behind him for his son-in-law, summoning him to appear and answer for his conduct; but this he never did, and consequently the marriage was annulled. But, in the course of this affair, an aged advocate became so deeply smitten with Adeline's charms as to be quite unable to devote himself longer to his profession without his fair client's consent and assistance. The lady, however, would certainly have refused it, had not her father, an old friend of the lawyer's, kindly stepped in to second the plea; and she was, at last, over-persuaded to yield her hand.

This time the ceremony was performed in as private a manner as possible. Only a few persons were aware that it was about to take place, and the domestics were in perfect ignorance of it until all was concluded. The supper-table had been removed, and the happy old bridegroom was just thinking of moving after it, when the waiter entered, and announced—the Marquis Gilles!

What a thunder-bolt of surprise for the whole party! M. Molinet alone had presence of mind to cry out: "Let the Marquis go to the Devil! Tell him we have nothing to say to each other."

But the noble Marquis was already in the room: "First, my dear Father," he said, "do me the justice to hear my defence, and send me there afterwards. On the eventful

night of my marriage, I was seized by robbers in my own court, and kidnapped blindfolded into a carriage, which proceeded the whole night. When it stopped, I was conducted into a place up steps, and down steps, until they took the bandage from my eyes—of very little service to me, in a dark room, with iron door and windows. Here the villains compelled me, by dint of threatening my life, to indite that false and wicked epistle to my beloved Adeline, but which procured me better treatment, and perhaps saved my life. Shortly afterwards they promised to release me, which they only did, however, within these last few hours. Yesterday they again blindfolded me, brought me out of the labyrinth, and conveyed me in a carriage to this very neighbourhood. Bidding me alight in some fields, they said to me: "That is your road to Paris; put your best foot foremost, and try to reach it before nightfall; for your young bride is celebrating her nuptials to-day with an old Parliament Advocate. So make haste, or you will have no chance of avoiding the honours that are in store for you." They then directed me to this house, and, before I had time to recover from my astonishment, they dragged me out of the carriage and drove me with bitter mocks and gibings from their presence."

"A fine romantic history," exclaimed the old Advocate; "but, my Lord Marquis, who will bear witness to all this? Besides, if you could, what would that help you? Your former marriage with my present bride, sir, has been formally revoked, rescinded, cancelled, and annulled."

"I know nothing of your quirks of law, and I should be a fool to contend with you; I will put it into the hands of some skilful expounder of justice like yourself. My present object in coming here is loudly to protest, once for all, against your presuming to usurp my place; for I neither can nor will listen to it."

"Good," replied the Advocate; "and that you likewise shall not venture to sport upon my manor, Marquis, I

hereby appeal to the sovereign fount of justice, to His Majesty the King."

"A most servile appeal," exclaimed the Marquis.

"And, moreover," continued the lawyer, "my wife shall be entrusted, as a sacred deposit, until the decision of the case, into the hands of her father. I will soon get your bill of divorce confirmed."

The noble Marquis expressed himself satisfied with these terms. Both the litigants then took leave of their father-in-law, and left his house in company with the other guests. The poor merchant, in the bitterness of his feelings, pronounced his malediction upon the whole tribe of suitors, sons-in-law, and husbands in the world. He had not the least idea, however, that two of them had set fire to the mansion of the third, and also abducted the unfortunate Marquis from his bridal chamber. Such information would doubtless have driven him stark mad; for, hard as the case was, he had not the least idea that he was now the father of six sons-in-law, while his only daughter remained without a husband. Yet such a strange fatality had fortune, in the variety of her vagaries, produced; though she spared the unlucky old gentleman the additional torment of hearing that so many of his sons were still alive. The two traitors, his second and third sons, instantly fled from the country, after the success of their last exploit, leaving the young Marquis and the old decayed barrister to settle their differences as they pleased.

They forthwith proceeded to try the question of *e thoro et mensa*, as respected the rich old merchant's daughter; but the cause, from one reason or other, was protracted so long that the old advocate died before the conclusion, an event which was hailed with singular pleasure by the young Marquis. Finding that the aged barrister was too impatient to await the result of the trial, the Marquis, on his side, began to sue for a restoration of conjugal rights, but met with unexpected difficulties from the young lady, no less

than from her father. They refused to give credit to the story of his abduction, and declared that he had meant to insult the family, in order to afford grounds for future separation; as he had before pleased himself by taking French leave of them, he might this time take himself off again in order to please them.

The sighing shepherd, shocked at this reception, pleaded his perfect innocence of the charge, invoking all the saints to bear witness to the truth of his assertion. But the young lady was inexorable, declaring that she would rather die than think of receiving so ungallant a swain, who had once so basely deserted her.

So the Marquis went to take the opinion of counsel, whose first question was "whether he could procure any witness or witnesses to his forcible abduction?"—He replied in the negative, and the lawyers shrugged up their shoulders, and advised him to think of proceeding no farther with such a case in a legal form. The same opinion seemed to be entertained by all his lordship's friends. They attempted to impress upon him how unbecoming his dignity it was to sigh and languish for the daughter of a citizen who rewarded him only with indifference and contempt. His pride took the alarm, and, shifting his affection for Adeline as well as he could, he disposed of his possessions in France and set off in a great huff on a tour into Spain.

How must we account, however, for the surprising coolness and cruelty evinced towards him by Adeline, unless we believe her to have been quite of a heartless, jilting disposition, and the most variable of her sex? There was something, indeed, in this; but it must, at the same time, be observed in her praise, that she had never been seriously attached to any of her six husbands, except the first, having yielded her hand more in compliance with her father's wishes and a transitory feeling of regard than from sentiments of esteem and love. Besides, in regard to the Marquis, her recollections were soon effaced by the appearance of a rival,

a very handsome young officer of Hussars, which made her more anxious than before to break off her engagements with the former. On this occasion her father had less difficulty than on any of the preceding in persuading her to listen to the young man's vows, and she accepted him with the same dutiful sentiments as heretofore.

Previous to the ceremony the good old merchant took his future son-in-law aside: "You are aware, my friend, that you are only following in the wake of six other lovers, who are most of them now deceased. Theirs has been a strange fate, and I imagine they must all have been bewitched. If you are bent upon running the same risk, and will not be advised to think better of it, there is one little piece of advice which I shall give you, and which may perhaps serve to counteract the charm. All manœuvres, you know, are lawful in love and war; and, after you come from church, I would have you never once lose sight of your bride, until you have secured her for your own."

Adeline was conducted from the altar between her father and her seventh husband, and was just proceeding up the steps into the house. Suddenly hasty footsteps were heard behind them, and some one inquired for M. Molinet. Upon turning round, the bridal party beheld a pale, haggard young man, in an officer's faded uniform, who stood looking at them supported upon a crutch.

"Who inquires for me?" said M. Molinet, trembling in every limb as he spoke. "Who are you? What is your business with me?"

"I am an unfortunate being," murmured the stranger, "betrayed by false friends; don't you recognise me?"

"No, sir," said Molinet; as the wedded pair were hurrying him up the steps; "I know nobody now."

"What," replied the stranger, "have my long sufferings so completely metamorphosed me? Are you too a stranger to me, Adeline? not recognised by my own wife! My first and only love, I am Alson!"

"Just Heavens!" cried the bride, "surely that voice——"

"Away with you!" exclaimed M. Molinet. "Do not listen to him, girl! he is only an impostor. Take her away, my dear son-in-law, and follow my advice." At the same time, M. Molinet pushed the young Hussar and his daughter before him into the house.

The stranger here clapped his hand upon his sword and, confronting his rival: "Not a step farther, on your life, sir. Would you be guilty of eloping with my wife before my eyes?"

With enraged looks, the Hussar drew his broadsword; but Adeline arrested his arm. "No bloodshed," she cried, with entreating accents, "for that man is Alson. My first and best beloved! my eye indeed can scarcely recognise you, but my heart speaks the truth too feelingly—it is you. Yet I have already been so vilely deceived in this manner that I am become suspicious of every one; I must, therefore, insist upon receiving still more positive proofs of your existence than your mere appearance will afford; nor deem it want of affection that dictates our separation until the period when these can be adduced. Believe me, I indulge not the least suspicion: but I owe thus much to my own character, and to the world. When once I am happy enough to be pronounced yours, lawfully yours, I will most joyfully give you my hand and live and die with you alone."

Adeline then retired weeping into her chamber. The young Hussar left the place with a bitter curse; and M. Molinet, with his eyes fixed in mute and perplexed dismay upon the features of Alson, after some cogitating and talking with himself, at length reached out his hand, saying, "The longer I puzzle myself with your face and figure, the more I seem to recollect somebody very like you; but I think it must have been in some other world. Be that, however, as it may, you are heartily welcome, my boy; my poor son Alson—if you are Alson: and forgive me for giving you so rude a reception, and for having you sent, so soon after

your marriage, abroad. I had no idea you would stay so long."

Alson, for in fact it was no one else, had no very great ordeal to undergo before he succeeded in establishing proofs of his identity. Wherever he appeared, the resemblance between him and his former self became more and more apparent, on slight examination.

The strange history of his capture and his subsequent adventures and final release are reserved for the ear of Adeline; and would, perhaps, appear tedious to any one else. By her he was received with unaffected tenderness, and they had the pleasure of being twice married to each other, the old gentleman insisting upon a repetition of the ceremony after so long an absence; and it was the only real marriage out of seven, or rather eight.

They were now truly happy and blessed with each other's society; and, had not the poor broken-down soldier died about a month after the ceremony, their happiness might have continued much longer. Adeline lamented him with true widow's tears; yet, after wearing her weeds awhile, being of a somewhat volatile and easy temper, she suffered the handsome young Hussar to come and wipe away her tears.

She consented to become his, as usual, at her father's request; and she was too sweet-tempered and gentle long to have resisted the request of any one who bespoke her kindly. They lived very happily together—though she had wed seven husbands in about the space of six years—and she spent about half a century with her last consort.

JOHANN CHRISTOPH FRIEDRICH VON SCHILLER

(1759–1805)

I

THE CRIMINAL, OR, MARTYR TO LOST HONOUR: A TRUE STORY

(Translated by THOMAS ROSCOE)

IN the whole history of man there is no chapter, perhaps, more fraught with instruction, both for his heart and his intellect, than the annals of his errors and excesses. On the commission of every grave offence, a proportionally strong power is brought into action. Inasmuch as the secret play of ambition, and all self-aspirations, are checked only by the feebler light of common feeling, they, in fact, become more powerful and vigorous, more gigantic, and louder in their demands. An exact observer, who has calculated how far the usual power of free-will may really be relied upon, and how far it may be correct to decide by analogy, will acquire much experience in the province of psychology, which might be applied with advantage to the rules of moral life.

There is something at once so uniform, and yet so compounded, in the human heart! One simple habit, or desire, may display itself in such a variety of forms and directions; produce so many opposite phenomena; and disguise itself

under so many characters; while so many dissimilar actions and characters may spring out of the same bias of mind, even when the being who is the subject of it suspects nothing of such connection between them.

Grant us only a Linnæus for the classification of the impulses and passions of man, as in the other kingdoms of nature, and what would be our surprise to find many whose criminal career is confined to the narrow sphere of a little town hedged in by local laws, connected with the monster Borgia in one and the same order?

Viewed in this light, there is much objection to the usual method of treating history; and here too, I conjecture, lies the difficulty in regard to turning its perusal to advantage, among the class of commoners, and other general readers, in social and moral life. There exists so direct a contrast between the mental exercise of the man of business and the quiet position of the reader, so wide a space may be said to intervene, that it is difficult, if not impossible, for the latter to detect, or even to conjecture, any connection. There remains a chasm, as it were, between the historical subject and the reader, which no effort of comparison or application can fill up; and its perusal, in place of inspiring a wholesome alarm, which might put the proud and confident upon their guard, merely excites a feeling of strangeness and indifference. We view the unhappy culprit as a being of foreign species, no less in the commission, than during the punishment of his crime: one whose blood circulates differently, whose will is obedient to other rules and impulses. Though human like ourselves, his fate excites little emotion; for sympathy is founded upon a vague sense of similar danger, and we are very far from indulging any idea of common danger, any degree of resemblance between ourselves and him. The instruction passes with the event away, and history, instead of becoming a school of education, must rest satisfied with the praise of having gratified our curiosity. To attain higher objects, and produce

better results, it must necessarily make choice between two methods: either the reader ought to be animated like the hero, or the hero appear cold as the reader.

I am aware that among the best histories of ancient and modern times a number are restricted to the first method, and appeal to the reader's heart by attractive pictures and incidents of the same kind. Such a style, however, is an encroachment upon the province of other writers, and injurious to the republican freedom of the reading classes, whose place it is to sit in judgment; while it, moreover, exceeds the due limits assigned to that species of composition, intruding more especially, as it does, upon the characteristics of the orator and the poet. The latter method, alone then, remains open to the writer of history.

The hero must become cold, like his reader, or, what amounts to as much, we must grow familiar before he proceeds to action; we must not merely pursue him through his whole career, but we ought to feel gratified in doing this. What he thinks is of still more importance to us than what he does, and the sources of his thoughts and actions than the results of these actions themselves. The earth of Mount Vesuvius has been analysed, in order to ascertain the source of its fires; and why should more attentive observation be bestowed upon a physical than upon a moral phenomenon? Why should we not equally inquire into the qualities and situation of things which surround such a character, even till we detect the concentrated embers which first awoke the internal fire that slumbered? To the dreamer who loves the wonderful, all that is strange and adventurous in such an appearance will have charms, while the friend of truth seeks to find a mother for these deserted children. He seeks her in the unalterable structure of the human soul, and in the changeable conditions to which it is outwardly subject, in both of which he finds them invariably true. He is no longer surprised to discover in the same soil where once only wholesome herbs appeared the poisonous hemlock

spread its baneful leaves; wisdom and folly; vice and virtue, nourished, as it were, in the same cradle.

Even if I should here illustrate none of the advantages to be derived from a knowledge of motives in such a mode of treating history, the attempt will at least serve to soften that cruel mockery and that proud security with which, in general, untempted virtue is apt to look down upon the fallen; while it may serve to promote the gentler spirit of toleration without which no wanderer can be brought back—the law find no reconciliation with an offender—no smitten member of society saved from the general conflagration.

Whether the offender, of whom I prepare to treat, still reserved a right to appeal to the tolerant spirit above-mentioned, or whether he were only a worthless limb cast off from the body of society, I shall not here presume to anticipate for the reader. Our compassion can no longer avail him; he died by the fiat of the law; but perhaps a dissection of the criminal body may afford some instruction to humanity, and possibly also to the course of justice.

Christian Wolf was the son of a publican in the district of —— (the name, for reasons which will be explained in the sequel, being suppressed), who, after his father's death, assisted his mother in the affairs of the hostelry until he reached his twentieth year. There was not much business, and Wolf had many leisure hours: even from school he brought back with him the character of a wilful lad. Grown-up maidens were known to make complaints against his pertness, while the youngsters all paid homage, throughout the village, to his inventive spirit. Nature had denied him the fair proportions bestowed on the rest of her children: he was short and plain, had thick curly hair of an ugly blackness; his nose appeared indented, as if flattened upon his face; his upper lip jutted out, which the kick of a horse had served farther to displace—altogether giving to his visage a revolting appearance, which held the women at a

distance, and afforded an object of merriment to his rivals or the stouter companions of his sports.

He determined to obtain by perseverance what was thus refused him, as he found too feelingly that he could never hope to please and appear amiable. The girl whom he selected treated him vilely enough, to be sure; though it was only animal impulse which he felt: he knew nothing of love. He had good grounds for suspecting that his rivals were more fortunate than himself; yet the girl was poor. A heart that remained proof against his attentions might, perhaps, he thought, become softened by his presents; but penury stared him too, in the face, and the rash effort he made to better his condition deprived him, on the contrary, of the little which he had saved from his services. Too indolent and inexperienced to increase the business of his inn, too proud, and at the same time too effeminate to exchange the free life he had hitherto led for that of a labouring boor, he saw only one career lying open to him: one which thousands before, and thousands after him, have trod with better fortune—that of genteel and spirited thieving. It so happened that his native place bordered upon the preserved woods of a neighbouring lord, and he became a deer-stealer. His quarry, of course, passed faithfully into the hands of the lady of his choice.

Among the lovers of Johanna was a young huntsman of the forest, named Robert. He soon observed the advantage which the free life of his rival Wolf had acquired over him, and with jealous suspicion he began to inquire into the change. He showed himself more frequently at the *Sun* —such was the sign of the hostelry; his keen eye, sharpened by jealousy, in a short time discovered the source of the newly-acquired wealth. Not long before, a severe edict had been published against poachers, which condemned the offender to punishment, a pretty long discipline in the house of correction. Robert became eager and persevering

in watching the secret motions of his enemy, and at length he succeeded even in surprising the unsuspicious culprit in the act. Wolf was secured, and it was only by expending the whole of his little remaining property that he was enabled to escape the punishment prepared for him.

Robert triumphed; his rival was driven from the field; Johanna dismissed him, for he was a beggar. Wolf knew his enemy, and that enemy was now the happy undisputed possessor of his lady's favours. A deep sense of poverty, united to injured pride, desertion, and jealousy, all took possession of his soul: necessity drove him forth into the wide world, but revenge and passion seemed to rivet him to the spot. A second time he betook himself to deer-stealing; a second time Robert redoubled his vigilance and activity, and betrayed him into the hands of justice. He now experienced the full severity of the law, had no more to give, and in a few weeks he was delivered up to the work-master, in the house of discipline.

A year of severe hardship followed, at the end of which his evil passions had increased, and his pride remained unsubdued under the pressure of his fate. The moment he became free he resumed his way to his native place, to appear before his Johanna, who had grown up into a fine woman. He approached, but all shunned him. This he had not anticipated; he shed tears; cruel want stared him in the face, and his pride was broken. He besought the great landowner of the place to permit him to toil daily for his pittance of bread; but the steward shrugged up his shoulders, and stouter competitors soon deprived him of all chance of success, and thrust him off the scene. He made a last effort; it was to obtain the poor vacant post of village herdsman, the only honest occupation remaining for him; but the steward declared that he would entrust the service to no such good-for-nothing fellow. Deceived in all his hopes, all his honest proposals rejected, he was at length

compelled a third time to become a poacher, and was again unlucky enough to fall into the hands of his more powerful enemy.

This repeated backsliding greatly aggravated his offence in the eyes of the judge, who consulted only the tenor of the statute, not any of the mitigating circumstances under which it had been violated. The law called for a solemn and exemplary punishment, and Wolf was condemned to be branded with the sign of the gallows upon the back, and to three years' hard labour in prison.

This term also expired; Wolf survived it, and was set at liberty; but he was a different being; it seemed like a new epoch of his life. Let us hear how he himself explains his internal feelings, as appeared upon one of his trials. "I entered its walls only a misguided being, but I left them a complete villain. I had before something in the world which was dear to me, and my pride was broken under a sense of shame. When brought into the fortress, I was placed among three-and-twenty other prisoners, of whom three were murderers, and the rest some of the most abandoned and inveterate robbers and thieves. They mocked if I uttered the name of the Deity, and invited me, by their example, to pronounce the most terrific blasphemies against our Redeemer. They sang the most vile and licentious songs, which, abandoned as I was, I could not hear without a feeling of disgust. Yet this was nothing compared with what I saw transacted, which carried my feelings of shame and abhorrence to a still higher pitch. No day passed without some repetition of such scenes, some piece of villainy or stratagem worse than the last. At first I shunned their society, and stopped my ears as much as possible at the horrid sounds I heard; but I stood in need of some living being, and the cruelty of my keepers had destroyed even my dog. The labour was hard, and inflicted tyrannically; I was ill, I wanted support; and when I openly declared how much I stood in need of compassion, I was compelled

to purchase it at the price of my last remaining scruples of conscience. It was thus I gradually accustomed myself to the most revolting deeds, and by the last quarter of the year I had actually outstripped my instructor.

"From this period I sighed for the day of freedom; for I was burning for vengeance. All mankind had injured me, because all were better and happier than I—I, who viewed myself as a martyr to natural right, an innocent victim of the law. Gnashing my teeth, I cursed my chains as I saw the sun rising from behind the mountain beyond our prison; for a distant prospect is double purgatory to a close prisoner. The free wind, as it whistled through the air-holes, and the swallow which flew from the iron trellis of my grating, seemed to mock my captivity, and rendered its contrast with the idea of freedom still more afflicting. Then it was I vowed hatred—deep and irreconcilable hatred—against everything which bore the human form, and, horrid as it was, this fatal vow I fulfilled.

"Again the first thought which struck me on my recovered liberty was to revisit my native place. In proportion as there was little to promise myself in the view of subsistence, my hunger for revenge seemed to increase. My heart throbbed wildly as I first caught a glimpse of the church steeple, which rose above the woods. It no longer sprung from a feeling of satisfaction, as on my first return. The recollection of my ruined affairs, with all their fatal consequences, rushed fresh upon my soul: I woke as out of the sleep of death; my wounds bled anew; and I hastened my steps in order to confront and alarm my enemies with my sudden appearance; for I felt that I now rather coveted farther degradation, instead of trembling at the prospect as before.

"The hour tolled to vespers just as I reached the middle of the market-place. The crowd was going thence towards the church. I was quickly recognised, and every one I met drew back. Hitherto I had ever been kind and friendly

to the children; and a little urchin whom I saw playing near skipped towards me, and entreated me to bestow on him a farthing's worth. He took it; then looked at me a moment in the face, and flung it back again. Had my blood been calmer I might have recalled to mind that I wore an enormous beard, which I brought from prison, and which gave me a very frightful appearance; but the wickedness of my heart had begun to obscure my reason, and I shed tears of rage, such as I had never shed before.

"The boy knew neither who I was nor whence I came; yet I cried, half audibly, 'What, does he shun me as if I were worse than a wild beast? Do I everywhere bear a mark upon my forehead, or is it my lot to bear only some resemblance to man, feeling, as I do, that I can never love a human being more?' The contempt of a young boy cut me deeper than three years' labour at the galleys, for I had done him a favour, and was guilty of no personal hatred, at least against him.

"I threw myself upon a piece of timber that lay opposite the church: I knew not exactly what it was I wished; but I well knew, and felt it bitterly, that none of the passers-by, many of them my former acquaintance, would once greet me—no, not a single one! I was at length unwillingly compelled to leave my station in order to seek a night's lodging; and as I was turning the corner of a street I all at once fell in with the girl who had deserted me—with my Johanna. 'My young host,' she exclaimed, and was going to fling her arms round me. 'Are you here again, my dear Host of the *Sun?* Heaven be praised you are come back!' Hunger and disease were visible in her whole dress and appearance; from her countenance she was evidently labouring under a loathsome disease; a single glance betrayed what a vile, abandoned creature she was become.

"I speedily conjectured what had happened. A party of the Prince's dragoons, which I had just met in the streets, convinced me that there was a garrison in the place.

'Soldier's trull!' I cried, as I turned my back upon her, and felt gratified that there was yet a creature lower than myself in the scale of being: in fact I had never loved her.

"I found my mother was dead. With the remnants of my little property our creditors had paid themselves during my absence. I had no one, and nothing, left me. The world cast me off like a poisonous weed, but I had now learned how to despise shame. Formerly I had wished to avoid the face of man, for contempt was intolerable to me; now I was eager to confront, and rejoiced to alarm them. It was so far well with me that I had nothing more to lose, nothing to preserve. I was no longer in need of any good quality, because no one gave me credit, no one employment.

"The world lay before me, and in foreign parts I might, perhaps, have acquired some respectability, but I had lost even the courage to affect, much more to attempt it. Punishment and despair had deprived me of this temper of mind. It was the last lesson to learn to dispense with honour, as I no longer ventured to boast any title to it. Had I had sufficient vanity and pride to make me quite sensible of my degradation, I should have delivered myself by self-destruction.

"In fact, I was myself still a stranger to the resolution which I had actually adopted. I wished to do evil, although it yet appeared in dark and uncertain shapes before me. I wished to deserve the destiny to which I had been consigned. I believed that laws were so many blessings to the world, and for this reason longed to violate them. I had formerly fallen into crime from error and misfortune; now it appeared more matter of free choice, for my own satisfaction.

"With unsubdued obstinacy, my first resolve was again to turn poacher. The habit had become a passion in me; and I was, moreover, compelled to subsist. Still more than this, I took pleasure in deriding the Prince's edict, and injuring the property of our great landowner in every way

I could. I no longer trembled at the idea of being apprehended, for I had a bullet ready to discharge at my informant, and I was confident in the certainty of my aim. I dropped every deer at which I fired; though I turned very little to account, leaving by far the largest share to rot upon the ground. I lived economically, only for the purpose of laying out my savings in powder and shot. My devastations upon the large game made much noise; but my existence was wholly forgotten; no suspicion attached to me.

"This mode of life I continued during several months. Early one morning I had, as usual, penetrated through the furthest woods in search of a deer, whose traces I had got; two hours I had pursued in vain, and was just giving it up for lost, when I again espied it at a distance. I was about to fire when, only a few steps from me, I perceived a hat lying upon the ground. Looking more sharply round me, I recognised the huntsman Robert concealed behind an oak, in the act of firing at the same deer. A death-like chill ran through my veins at the sight of him. There stood the being whom of all living creatures upon the wide earth I most utterly detested, and that being was within reach of my fire. At that instant it appeared as if the fate of the whole world depended upon the goodness of my flint; the deep concentrated hatred of a whole life was felt at my finger-ends, which were preparing to level the murderous weapon. A dread, invisible hand appeared hovering over me; the time-piece of my destiny pointed irrevocably to this dark and terrific minute. My hand trembled as it obeyed the fearful impulse; my teeth rattled, as if in an ague fit; and my breath stopped, and laboured at my breast.

"During a full minute my aim wavered between the man and the deer; but the next, and the next, revenge and conscience were at bitter strife, doubtful long—till sudden passion fired my soul, and the huntsman lay dying upon the ground!

"The fatal instrument fell from my hand. 'Murderer!'

I stammered out. The woods were still as a churchyard, and I heard myself plainly pronounce that word. As I drew nigh, the huntsman gave a last gasp. I saw him die. I stood speechless over his body for some time; and then suddenly burst into a loud, loud laugh: 'Will you keep a clean tongue now, good friend, and cease accusing your neighbours?'—and I then stepped boldly up to him, and turned the face of the dead man upwards. His eyes were wide open; and I stopped suddenly as I was going to speak, and felt anxious. A sense of strangeness and wonder took possession of me, and I did not like to leave the spot.

"Until now I calculated I had more than expiated my crimes; but something had here happened for which I had yet to pay. An hour before it would have been impossible for any one to have convinced me that I was not the vilest of human beings; now I began to suspect that, give me back an hour, and I should be in fact an enviable man.

"It was not the wrath of Heaven—I know not exactly what it was—that alarmed me. It was a confused recollection of corporeal penalty and pain, along with the execution of a child murder which I once witnessed when a schoolboy. There was something particularly frightful in the idea of the prospect that lay before me; I felt that I had forfeited my life. I cannot here recall anything farther: only that I was frequently wishing that he could be restored to life. I attempted to recall more forcibly all the insults and injuries the deceased, while living, had heaped upon me; yet, strange to say, my memory seemed to have forsaken me. From amidst all I could not collect anything which at all accounted for the rage which I had felt only a quarter of an hour before. I could in no way ascertain or satisfy myself how I had come to commit the murder.

"I still stood before the body—stood and lingered. The cracking of a whip, and the sound of a wagon proceeding through the wood, first recalled me to myself. It was scarcely a quarter of a mile distant from the high road, where

the deed was perpetrated. It was full time to look to my own safety. Involuntarily I threw myself deeper into the woods. On the way I bethought me that the deceased had been possessed of a watch: I wanted money to reach the boundaries, yet I had not courage to return to the place where he lay. Here I was startled at the idea of a devil and an omnipresent God. I madly summoned all my resolution; determined to cope with all the infernal powers, and ran back to the spot. I found what I had expected, and more than a dollar contained in a green purse. Just as I was about to secure both I suddenly stopped and thrust the money aside: not from any fear or shame at adding robbery to my crime; but rather from a feeling of pride. I left the watch and took only part of the money; for I wished to pass for the personal enemy of the deceased, not as his robber.

"Again I flew through the woods; I knew that they extended four German miles northward, and there joined the boundaries. I ran almost breathless until noon; the rapidity of my flight dissipated my thoughts, though the pangs of conscience returned with double force in proportion as my strength deserted me. Dreadful shapes seemed to swim before my eyes, and threatened and struck at me, while I seemed to feel sharp knives in my breast. There was only a fearful choice left me, and choose I must—between a life of restless agony, or laying violent hands upon myself. For this last, however, I had not the necessary courage, and soon adopted the fixed resolution of remaining where I was. Hemmed in between the certain sufferings of life and the nameless dread of eternity, equally unfit to live as to die, I had now continued my flight during six hours, the last full of agonising pain, such as no living being can describe.

"Buried in my own thoughts, with my hat involuntarily slouched over my countenance, as if to conceal myself from the eye of surrounding nature, I slowly wound my way up

a narrow footpath, leading through the darkest part of the thicket. Suddenly I heard a hoarse, commanding voice, that cried out, 'Halt!' It was close to me; my slouched hat and confusion having prevented me from looking around me. I looked up, and beheld a man of a wild aspect hastening towards me. He held a large, knotty club in his hand; his figure approached, or appeared in my eyes to approach the gigantic; his skin was of a yellowish black, which, contrasted with the large white of his oblique eye, gave him a truly horrible appearance. Instead of a girdle he wore a thick rope doubled round a green woollen coat, to which hung a large butcher's knife and a pistol. The call was repeated, and the next moment I felt the grasp of a strong arm. The voice of a man had thrown me into alarm, but the sight of a villain reassured me. In my condition I had cause to tremble in the presence of an honest man—not in that of a robber.

"'Who goes there?' he said, as he grasped me fast. 'One like thyself,' was my reply, 'if thou be truly what thou seemest to be!'

"'There was no way for thee here. What art seeking?' 'What need of the question here?' I replied ironically.

"The man measured me twice earnestly, from head to foot, as if he were comparing my figure with his, and my answer with my appearance.

"'Thou speakest as boldly as a beggar,' he added. 'That may be; a beggar I was but yesterday.' The man laughed: 'One would swear,' he cried, 'that thou wouldst not pass for aught better now!' 'For something worse, I hope then,' continued I. 'Softly, friend! why are you in such haste? Have you no time to spare?'

"I considered a moment: I know not how the words escaped my lips: 'Life is short,' said I earnestly, 'and hell endures for ever.'

He looked at me amazed: 'May I be d——d,' cried he at length, 'but I think that thou are very nearly related to

the family of the Gallows.' 'Not very far wide, perhaps; so welcome, brother!' 'Done, comrade,' he added, as he took my hand, and then pulled out a tin flask from his large game-pocket, drained it pretty deeply, and then gave it to me. My flight and my terrors had nearly exhausted my strength: during the whole of this wretched day I had never once broken my fast. I was afraid of dying a lingering death in the desert; for the space of three miles round no refreshment was to be found. Imagine how eagerly I snatched at the proffered cup, and drank my comrade's health. Fresh strength inspired me; I felt reviving courage at my heart; hope and love of life glowed warmly in my breast, and I began to think I was not altogether so wretched; such was the efficacy of a single draught. I confess, on the contrary, that my situation seemed to border on the happy; for at last, after a thousand disappointments, I had met with a being who resembled me. In the lost condition in which I found myself, I should have claimed companionship and drank with the evil spirit, in order to have some one in whom to confide.

"The man threw himself carelessly upon the grass, and I did the same.

"'Your liquor has done me good,' I observed; 'we must become better acquainted.'

"He now struck fire, in order to light his pipe.

"'Have you driven this trade long?' inquired I.

"He gave me a keen look. 'What do you mean by that?'

"'Has this often been bloody?' I continued, as I chucked the knife at his girdle.

"'What are you?' he cried, rather alarmed, and laid down his pipe.

"'A murderer, like yourself, only I am but a beginner.'

"The man glanced wildly at me for a moment, and then resumed his pipe.

"'You do not live near here?' he observed.

"'Three miles hence, mine Host of the *Sun*. Should you happen to have heard of me?'

"The man sprang to his feet like one possessed. 'What! the deer-stealer, Wolf!' he cried eagerly.

"'The same.'

"'Welcome, comrade! thrice welcome!' and he shook me heartily by the hand. 'Have I at last got you with me, mine Host of the *Sun?* I have long bethought me, both by day and night, to have a catch at you. I know you well; —yes, I know all; and I have for some time counted upon you.'

"'Counted upon me! in what way, comrade?'

"'Why, the whole country rings with thy name. Thou hast enemies; a placeman has trampled thee in the dust. Wolf! their deeds against thee cried unto Heaven for justice—for revenge.'

"The robber grew warm: 'Because you shot a deer, or a swine or two, which the Prince feeds upon the acorns of our fields, they consigned thee for years to the work-house, to the fortress, the galleys; they deprived thee of house and credit, and made thee a beggar. Is it indeed come to this—that a man is to be reckoned no higher than a deer, no better than the beasts of the fields—and a lad of thy spirit could put up with this?'

"'Could I help it?'

"'That we will look to now. But say, whence come you, and what are your designs?'

"I directly related my whole history. The robber, before I had completed it, sprang from the ground impatiently, and drew me after him. 'Come, brother, comrade, brave Host of the *Sun*, now thou art ripe for action; now thou art come in time for what I wanted thee. I will show thee the road to honour; trust me, I will; and follow me.'

"'Whither wend you, then?'

"'Inquire no more. Follow.' And he pulled me forcibly along.

"We had proceeded about a quarter of a mile when the wood became deeper and darker. There was no longer any path; its aspect was wild and dreary. Neither of us spoke a word, until at last my guide's whistle roused me from my reflections.

"I looked up—we stood on the rugged edge of a rocky eminence, which opened as we proceeded lower into a deep cavern. A second whistle replied to the former, from the interior; and a ladder rose slowly, as if of its own accord, from the cave below us. My guide first descended, bidding me to wait there until he should return. 'I must first chain our great dog,' he observed; 'thou art strange, and the beast would tear thee.' He then crept down. It simply required a bold heart to have drawn the ladder up, and become again free. My flight was secure. I confess that this struck me. I looked down into the cavern, that seemed yawning to receive me; something reminded me of the bottomless pit, whence there is no deliverance more. I shuddered at the career I was about to tread, and sudden flight alone could redeem me. I resolved to fly. My hand was already on the ladder when all at once there thundered in my ears, and it seemed to resound like the mocking laughter of hell—'What has a murderer to lose?' and my arm fell palsied by my side. My reckoning was made; the hour of remorse was concluded; my murder lay behind me, like a tower of rock, and severed my return for ever.

"My guide, likewise, returned, and informed me that I might go down. There no longer remained any choice: I crept into the yawning abyss. We had proceeded only a few steps below the wall of rock, when the entrance grew wider, and a number of heads became visible. Middle way between a round green plat opened upon us, where we found from eighteen to twenty men thrown carelessly round a large fire. 'Here, my brave boys,' cried my conductor, thrusting me into the midst of them; 'here is mine Host of the *Sun!* and bid him welcome!'

"'Mine Host of the *Sun!*' cried each and every one, as he sprang up, and gathered round me, while the women followed their example. Shall I confess it? the joy was loud and boundless; confidence and esteem were pictured in every face: one pressed my hands, another took me by my garment, and my whole reception was like that of a man who meets an old friend of known worth and hearty feelings. My arrival interrupted the carousal which had already begun; but it was speedily revived: a cup was handed me, and I drank a welcome to my new friends. Wild fowl and game of every kind formed our feast, and the cups went speedily round. Good cheer and harmony seemed to reign over the whole assembly, and all seemed to vie with each other in displaying their delight in celebrating the day of my arrival.

"I was placed between two women at the head of the table, as a mark of honour. I anticipated the reproach of all the rest of their sex; but how pleasingly was I surprised at their kind treatment. Under the rude weeds they wore I recognised a female form, lovely as I had ever beheld it

"Margaret, the oldest and the most beautiful of the two, went by the name of maiden, and was not more than five-and-twenty years of age. Her language was very bold, and her features expressed more than she said. Maria, the younger, had been married, but had absconded from her husband, on account of his ill-treatment of her. She had a lighter figure, but looked pale and sickly; and she failed to excite the glow of pleasure inspired by her brighter neighbour. Both, however, became rivals for my notice; the beautiful Margaret tried to vanquish my diffidence by her bare-faced jokes; but the whole woman revolted me, and my heart became a prey to the more coy Maria.

"'You see, my good Host of the *Sun*,' cried my conductor, 'how we live together, and every day resembles the foregoing. Is it true, comrades?' 'Every day like the last!' echoed the whole circle. 'Now if our mode of life

be to your fancy, Host—and why should it not?—say the word boldly, and thou shalt be our chief. As yet I am he; but I will resign in thy favour: so rejoice with us, comrade!'

"A willing *yes* burst from the whole circle. My brain was on fire; wine and ambition tingled in my veins. The world had cast me out, like an infected thing: here I found the reception of a brother, good cheer and honour. Whatever choice I made, death still awaited me: here, at least, I might sell my life for the highest and brightest prize it was worth. Sensuality was my besetting sin; the sex had hitherto treated me only with contempt; all favour and boundless indulgence here invited my embrace. 'I remain with you, comrades,' I cried out with loud decision, and stepped into the midst of the band. 'Yes, I remain with you, if ye will yield me my fair neighbour for a mate!'—All assented, not a single murmur met my ear: I became the undisputed master of a courtezan, and the captain of a banditti."

The subsequent portion of this history I omit: the horrible and the revolting can have no claim—can afford no instruction to the reader.

An unhappy wretch, sunk into so deep an abyss, must commit everything permitted to human nature: yet that no second murder ever stained his hands formed part of his confession at the rack.

The robber Wolf's reputation speedily spread throughout the whole district. The highways became unsafe: nightly excursions alarmed the citizens. The name of the Host of the *Sun* was the terror of the peasantry. Justice long pursued him, and a price was set upon his head. He was always lucky enough to escape the snares, and he soon availed himself of the superstition of the people to add to his security. His connections might well spread, they said, when he had entered into a bond with the devil, and could bewitch whom he pleased. The district in which he played his part then belonged, even less than now, to the more intelligent portion of Germany: the peasantry gave full

credit to the report, and his person was safe. No one showed any inclination to meddle with a wretch employed in the service of the devil.

He had already continued this lamentable career during a whole year, when it so happened that he began to find it insupportable. The band at whose head he was placed deceived his expectations. A seductive appearance had, in the first instance, inflamed his imagination, heated as it was with wine; but now he saw, with alarm, that hunger and privations of all kind succeeded to abundance, and his life not unfrequently depended on a single meal. He was hourly in dread of perishing of want; while under such pressure, fraternal harmony disappeared: envy, suspicion, and hatred began to work the ruin of the abandoned crew.

Justice held out a reward to any person who would deliver him alive into its hands; even though he were an accomplice, his pardon would be granted. The wretched Wolf was aware of his danger: the honour of those who had betrayed both God and man was small security for him.

His sleep forsook him: incessant deadly terror and anxiety banished all rest; the dreadful spectre of suspicion dogged his footsteps, pursued him in his dreams, and tortured his waking hours. His conscience, too, under these fears and privations, began to make itself heard, while the slumbering embers of remorse were roused into flames by the gathering storm. His former abhorrence of mankind changed its object, and fixed deadlier fangs upon himself. He cast his eye over all animated nature, and found nothing deserving his bitter curse—except himself.

Vice had exhausted the whole of its bitter lessons upon him: his natural strong sense vanquished the lamentable delusion under which he had so long laboured. He now felt to what a depth he had fallen, and the most cutting grief occupied the place of callous indifference and despair. He wept for the recovery of past days, for he felt too keenly to what different purposes he would apply them. He at

length began to hope that he might recover some degree of uprightness, while he longed so much to do so. At the highest pitch of his iniquities he was in fact nearer attached to virtue than he had perhaps been previous to his first offence.

About this period the Seven Years' War had broken out, and the levy made of soldiers was very great. This unhappy being hoped to take advantage of such a circumstance, and addressed a letter to his former native Prince, from which I extract what follows:

"Should your princely patronage not refuse to stoop so low as a wretch of my character—should afford compassion to the most unhappy of mankind, Oh, most gracious lord, give ear unto my prayer! Assassin and robber as I am, proscribed by law, and pursued by justice on all sides, I pray for strength to deliver myself into its hands: at the same time I offer up a particular prayer, a suppliant at your throne. I abhor my life, and fear death no more; but it is dreadful to me to think of dying without having deserved to live. Surely I might be allowed to repair some portion of my past life, to expiate my crimes, and reconcile myself by serving the State which I have injured. If my destruction would afford an example to the world, it would make no reparation for my deeds. I now abhor vice, and long most ardently to follow in the paths of virtue and integrity. Bold deeds have I done, exploits that terrified my native land; yet bolder let me achieve in the eye of my Prince and country, in a cause that may confer benefit.

"It is true that I here entreat something very unusual. My life is forfeited, and Justice will not listen to my voice. Still I am not a bondsman, not a convicted captive; I am free, and fear has the least part in the prayer I am addressing to you.

"It is an act of grace which I seek for. My claims of justice, were I to enforce them, would avail me nothing. Yet I would remind my judges of one thing: the hand of law

first impelled me into my present career, it deprived me of respect and honour for ever. If I had then been treated with more reason, justice, lenity, I should not now have been in the act of soliciting your royal mercy.

"Permit grace, instead of justice, for once, my noble Prince, to have its course. If it, indeed, be in your princely power to soften the harshness of the law, oh! grant me the boon of life! It shall be devoted heart and soul to your service. May this be: so permit me to receive the notification of your gracious pleasure in an open letter, and upon your royal word I will instantly repair to fulfil my duty in the city. Should it, alas! be decided against me, justice that will run its stern career must permit me to run mine."

There was no answer returned to this prayer, nor to a second and third, in which the wretched suppliant solicited for the post of common trooper in the Prince's service. His hopes of pardon being thus extinguished, he determined to abandon his native state, in order to enter the King of Prussia's service, and die like a brave soldier.

He withdrew secretly from his band, and began his journey. His way lay through a small country town, where he intended to pass the night. Shortly before strict mandates had been issued for the examination of all travellers, the Prince having taken part in the war. The Governor of this little city happened to be employed in giving directions when mine Host of the *Sun* rode up to the place. His appearance was something of a courier, with the addition of rather a wild and revolting aspect. The hungry-looking animal he rode, with the burlesque cut of his attire, in which the time of its service was more conspicuous than its taste, was strangely contrasted with a countenance on which were impressed all the ferocious traces of passion perceptible in that of a soldier lying dead upon the field. The gate-clerk actually started at the sight of his features, though he had grown grey in his office, which, during a period of forty

years, had brought him acquainted with all the vagabonds in the surrounding district.

The keen eye of the gate inquisitor could not easily be deceived. He closed the bar behind Wolf, and inquired for his pass as he laid his hand upon his horse's rein. Wolf, however, was prepared: he handed him his pass, one of which he had plundered a poor merchant. Still the man hesitated; a single paper was not enough to satisfy our forty years' toll-keeper, and he referred the matter to the Governor. This last gave more credit to his eyes than to Wolf's passport, and begged he would follow him to the Town-house.

There the head of the police examined the pass, and declared it to be correct. He was an avowed admirer of novelty, and was fond of chatting the latest news over his bottle. The pass informed him that the party had just left the scene of action where the war had broken out. Here the man in office hoped to glean some private intelligence, and despatched his secretary to invite the traveller to come and take a glass of wine with him. Meanwhile our Host of the *Sun* was standing opposite the Town-house: his odd appearance had collected the rabble around him. A murmur reached his ears: doubts and guesses were hazarded as to the character both of the rider and his steed, and the insolence of the wretches at length broke out into open tumult. Unluckily for Wolf, the horse, which everybody seemed to be pointing at, had been stolen; and he now imagined that it was recognised as such. The unexpected invitation of the police officer seemed to confirm his suspicions. He now held it certain that his false pass had been detected, and that the whole was a feint to betray him alive and defenceless into their hands. A bad conscience betrayed him into an error: he gave his horse the spur, and rode off without returning any answer.

This sudden flight became the signal for a riot. "A thief! a thief!" they all cried with one accord, and hastened

after him. It was for life or death, and Wolf kept the advantage. He is on the point of rescue, but an invisible hand is over him; the hour of destiny had arrived—the Nemesis; justice was only to be propitiated with the blood of her debtor. The last street he turned into to effect his escape had no thoroughfare; he was compelled to turn round and face his pursuers. The report of this occurrence threw the whole place into an uproar. Crowd collects upon crowd; all the streets are stopped up, and an army of enemies cut off his retreat. He draws a pistol from his holster; the throng recoils, and he attempts to cut his way through.

"The first man," he cried, "who dares me dies!" He proceeds; there is a long pause; till at length an old gaoler, approaching him behind, seized him by the arm and wrested the pistol from his hand, just as he was in the act of firing. It fell to the ground, and the wretched man is next torn from his horse and borne in brutal triumph back into the Town-house.

"Who are you?" inquired the magistrate, in the same brutal tone, as if triumphing in his woes.

"One who is resolved to answer no questions, until he be tried more civilly!"

"Who are you, I say?"

"Who should I be, but the man I have already represented myself? I have travelled far and wide, and traversed all Germany without once meeting with such an insulting reception as this!"

"Your sudden flight, however, looks very ugly; very suspicious indeed. Wherefore did you make off?"

"I was weary of the mockery and insults of your rabble!"

"But you threatened to fire, sir!"

"True, but my pistol was only powder. They tried the weapon, and there was no ball."

"Then why did you carry arms at all?"

"Because I have articles of value with me, and because

I was informed of a certain robber, who infested these parts, named Host of the *Sun*."

"Your answers at least prove your courage, but your innocence is another affair. I give you time, from this until to-morrow, to recollect and discover the truth."

"I shall return the same answers; no others."

"Gaoler! take your prisoner to the tower!"

"To the tower! How, my Lord! justice is banished, then, from your state? I shall require satisfaction, sir."

"You shall have it, when you have fully cleared yourself."

On the following morning it was suggested by the head of the police that perhaps, being innocent, a harsh examination was not calculated to conquer the prisoner's obstinacy; that it might be more politic to treat him with civility and moderation. A sworn jury was assembled, and the prisoner conducted into their presence.

"You must excuse the somewhat harsh style in which we began to examine you yesterday, sir."

"Certainly, when you please to apprehend me aright."

"Our laws are severe, and your affair made much noise. I cannot venture to discharge you without a violation of my duty: appearances are against you. I am anxious that you should state something which may remove this impression."

"True! had I anything to allege."

"In such case I shall be compelled to communicate the affair to Government, and await its directions."

"And what then?"

"Then you encounter the risk of having attempted to pass the boundaries, and if you obtain mercy you will be subject to the levy."

Wolf remained silent during some minutes, as if struggling with some deep internal feeling. Then, turning suddenly towards the magistrate, he inquired, "May I be permitted a quarter of an hour's audience with you?"

The jury looked very suspiciously at him; but at a sign from the magistrate they instantly withdrew.

"Now what is it you wish to say to me?"

"Your deportment towards me yesterday, my lord, would never have brought me to confession. I laugh at compulsion. The difference, the kindness, of your conduct to-day inspires me with a feeling of confidence and esteem. I believe you to be a worthy man."

"What do you wish to say to me?"

"I find, I say, you are a worthy man. I have long wished to meet with such an one! let me for once shake hands with an honest man."

"What is your object, sir, in this?"

"Your hair is grown grey with years; you look respectable; you must have seen much of the world. And you must have known what it is to suffer—is it not true?—and are since grown more humane!"

"Good sir, why do you talk thus?"

"Yes, you are just standing on the brink of eternity: soon you will stand in need of the Almighty's mercy. Will you deny it to one of his creatures? No, you will not. Do you not yet suspect? Cannot you conjecture with whom you speak?"

"What is it you mean? you alarm me."

"Still don't you suspect me? Write, sir, to the Prince; state in what manner I was found, and how I became my own accuser. Impress upon him that God will at the last day so be merciful unto him as he shall now show mercy unto me! Oh, entreat hard for me, worthy old man! and shed a tear over what you write: for I—— I am the Host of the *Sun!*"

JOHANN CHRISTOPH FRIEDRICH VON SCHILLER

(1759–1805)

II

THE SPORT OF DESTINY[1]

(Translated by THOMAS ROSCOE)

ALOYSIUS VON G—— was the son of a commoner of some note in the ——— Company's service, and the germs of his naturally happy genius were early unfolded by a liberal education. While yet young, but well grounded in the principles of knowledge, he entered into the military service, under his native Prince, to whom he soon made himself known as a young man of great merit, and still greater expectations. G—— was now in the full glow of youth, and the Prince about the same age. G—— was rash and enterprising; while the Prince, of a similar disposition, was fondly attached to such characters. Endued with a rich vein of wit, as well as information, which gave a zest to their intercourse, G—— became an agreeable addition to every circle in which he moved, from the evenness of his good humour and the charm and spirit which he infused into every subject. The Prince had, likewise, good sense enough to appreciate his virtues, virtues which he himself possessed in no ordinary degree. Indeed, all he attempted, even his recreations, bore a lofty character: difficulties deterred him not, and no disappointment could vanquish

[1] In the original, this tale is further entitled "A Fragment Borrowed from Real History," in order only (most probably) to give it a more striking air of sincerity and truth —Translator's note.

his spirit of perseverance. The value of this last quality was heightened by a very pleasing figure, an appearance of blooming health and Herculean power, animated by the eloquent play of a spirit which shone in his eye, in his carriage, and even in a natural dignity, relieved by a due share of modesty of manner. If the Prince was charmed with the spirit of his new associate, his seductive exterior appealed no less powerfully to his approbation and his taste Similarity of age, of inclination, and of character shortly led to a degree of intimacy, which to all the warmth of friendship added all the fervour and sympathy of early youth. G—— stepped from one promotion to another, although these proofs of favour still appeared, in the eyes of the Prince, to leave him far behind what his deserts entitled him to. His good fortune rapidly advanced, for the author of it was his greatest admirer and his warmest friend. Not yet twenty-two years of age, he already saw himself placed upon an eminence formerly attained only by the most fortunate at the close of their career. But his active spirit was incapable of reposing long in the lap of ease and idle vanity, or contenting itself with the glittering trappings of a large fortune, for the application of which, however, as well as its enjoyment, he by no means wanted either inclination or power. Often when the Prince was engaged in parties of pleasure his young favourite would seek the calm oak or beechen shade, and devote himself with unwearied assiduity to affairs, in which he at length became so skilful and judicious that no opportunity of employing him was omitted in which the talent of a single individual was required. From the mere companion of his pleasures, he soon became first counsellor and Minister, and finally the director of his Prince. In a short time there was no way to obtain the royal favour but through him. He had the disposal of all rank and offices, all rewards and remunerations were received through his hands.

Still G—— was far too young and inexperienced, and had

risen by too rapid strides, to enjoy his vast influence with moderation. The height on which he contemplated himself made his ambition giddy, and all modesty forsook him when he achieved the last honours which he had in view. The respectful humility and attentions shown him by the first nobles of the land, by all who, in birth, fortune, and reputation, among the oldest and most experienced of their age, so far surpassed him, excited the slumbering embers of pride and tyranny, while his unlimited power produced an evident hardness of character, which thenceforth, throughout all the variations of his fortune, remained. There was no service, however painful or great, which his friends might not venture to solicit; but woe be to his enemies! for, in proportion as his favours exceeded all due limits, his revenge was bitter and fatal. He was less solicitous to enrich himself than a number of his creatures; such as were most eager to do him fealty, and obey him as the author of their fortunes, while sheer whim, not justice, dictated his choice of them. Yet by exacting too much, by the haughtiness of his commands and whole demeanour, he soon weaned from him the hearts even of those who were most bounden to him; while his rivals and secret enviers of his power were quickly converted into his deadliest enemies.

Among others, who kept the most jealous eye upon all his motions, and with the quick, steady hand of hate were collecting the materials for his future accusation and slowly undermining the pillars of his greatness, was a Piedmontese Count, named Joseph Martinenzo, belonging to the Prince's suite. G—— himself had promoted him, as a poor harmless obedient creature, to his present post—that of supplying his own place in attending upon the pleasures of his princely master, which he began to find too irksome, and which he willingly exchanged for some more important occupation.

Viewing this man merely as the work of his own hands, which he might, at any period he best pleased, again consign to its original nothingness, he felt assured, from equal

motives of fear and gratitude, of the fidelity of his creature. He thus fell into the same error as was committed by Richelieu, in entrusting Lewis the Thirteenth to the care of the young Le Grand, as one of his playthings. Without Richelieu's ability, also, of repairing so great a mistake, he had moreover to deal with a far bitterer enemy than the French Minister had to encounter. Instead of boasting of his good fortune, or allowing his patron to feel that he could venture to dispense with his farther patronage, Martinenzo was only the more cautious to maintain the show of dependence, and to bind himself with affected humility in closer alliance with his benefactor. Meanwhile, he did not omit to avail himself of the advantage afforded him by his office to ingratiate himself by every means in his power personally with the Prince; until from being useful, he became indispensable to him. In a very short period he made himself master of the Prince's mind—he discovered all the avenues to his confidence and favour, in both which he then gradually usurped a place. All those arts which pride and a natural elevation of character had taught the Minister to hold in contempt were brought into play by the Italian, who was not any way scrupulous in the attainment of his object, about the means employed, however vile and despicable. He was well aware that mankind never stand so much in need of a guide and companion as in the career of vice, and that nothing so much conduces to unreserved confidence as participation in common foibles. With this knowledge he proceeded to play upon the Prince, to excite passions which had hitherto lain dormant, and direct them, as his confidential adviser and accomplice, to the worst of purposes. By a train of the most seductive arts he plunged him into excesses which admitted of no participation and no witness, and thus finally became master of secrets which were to be entrusted to no third person. Upon the progressive degradation of the Prince's character he now began to lay the foundation of his own fortunes; the secrets which

rendered him so formidable soon obtained for him complete dominion over the Prince's feelings, before G—— even suspected that he had a rival.

It may appear strange that so important a change should escape the Minister's sagacity; but he had, unluckily, too high an opinion of his worth to suspect that a man like Martinenzo would venture to start up as an opponent; while the latter was himself too cautious to commit the least error which might tend to rouse him from his proud security. The same overweening confidence which had caused the downfall of so many of his predecessors from the slippery summit of royal favour was fast preparing the Minister's ruin. The confidential terms upon which he saw his own creature Martinenzo with his master gave him no uneasiness; he was glad to resign a species of favour which he despised, and which had never offered itself to him as the goal of his ambition: it was only as it smoothed his path to power that he had ever valued the Prince's friendship, and having ascended the summit of his wishes, he inconsiderately threw down the ladder by which he had risen.

Martinenzo was not the man to play a subordinate part. At each step in the Prince's favour his hopes, too, rose higher, and his ambition, in so friendly a soil, began to strike deeper and stronger roots. His artful game of humility towards his benefactor became daily more hateful to him, in proportion as the growth of his reputation excited haughtier feelings. The Minister's deportment towards him, on the other hand, so far from becoming more delicate with his rapid rise in the Prince's favour, evidently aimed at humbling his growing pride by wholesome admonitions reminding him of his dependence—a species of tyranny which finally grew so intolerable that he eagerly laid a plot to end it at a single blow, and aimed boldly at the destruction of his rival. Under an impenetrable veil of dissimulation he brought his plan to full maturity. Still he did not venture to enter into open competition with his rival: although the

first glow of the Minister's favour was at an end, it had commenced too early, and spread too deep roots, to be torn rudely from the bosom of the Prince. The slightest circumstance might restore it to all its former vigour, a truth which convinced the Italian that the blow which he was about to strike must either fail or prove fatal. The ground which the Minister had lost in the Prince's affections was perhaps compensated by the degrees of respect and awe acquired in its place, with which he held both his mind and councils in control—a control arising out of his political skill and fidelity, not easily shaken off. Dear as he had once been to his master as a friend, he was now equally powerful as a Minister.

By what means the Italian actually succeeded in his object remains a secret with the few who aided him in directing and in striking the blow. It was reported that he had detected a secret correspondence of a treacherous nature, carried on by the Minister with a neighbouring Court; but whether his proposals had been listened to or rejected, remained matter of doubt. Whatever degree of truth there might be in the accusation, it fully answered the end proposed. The Prince viewed G—— in the light of one of the most ungrateful and treacherous of mankind, whose delinquencies were fully proved, and only awaited their due punishment. This was arranged secretly between the new favourite and his master; G—— was unconscious of the gathering storm, and continued wrapt in this fatal security, until the last startling and terrific moment, which precipitated him from the summit of princely honours—the envy and the gaze of all eyes—into the lowest depths of obloquy and contempt.

On the appointed day, G—— appeared as usual upon the parade, no longer an ensign, as he had commenced not many years before, but as an officer of distinguished rank. Even this was only meant as a modest veil for the exercise of his political power, which, in fact, placed him above

the foremost of the land. The parade was his favourite place of indulging all the pride of patronage, of receiving the obsequious attentions of his creatures, and thus rewarding himself for the laborious exertions of the day. His chief dependents, all men of rank, were seen gathering round him, eager to offer their obeisance, yet evidently anxious as to the kind of reception they might meet with. The Prince himself, as he passed by, beheld his chief Minister with a relenting eye; he felt how much more dangerous it would be to dispense with the services of such a man than with the friendship of his rival. Yet this was the spot where he was flattered, and almost adored like a god, which had just been cruelly selected for the revolting scene of his disgrace; but the Prince rejoined the Italian, and the affair was suffered to proceed. G—— mingled carelessly in the well-known circle, quite as unsuspicious of the bursting storm as their honoured patron, offering their distant and most flattering respects, and awaiting his commands. Shortly appeared Martinenzo, accompanied by some State officers, no longer the same meek, cringing, smiling courtling; the presumption and insolence of a lackey suddenly elevated into a master were visible in his quick, haughty step and his fiery eye. He marched straight up to the Prime Minister, and confronted him, with his hat on, for some moments, without uttering a word; then in the Prince's name he required his sword. This was handed to him with a look of silent, terrific emotion; and, thrusting the naked point into the ground, he split it into shivers with his foot; the fragments lay at G——'s feet. At this signal the two adjutants likewise seized him; one strove to tear the order of the cross from his breast, the other pulled off the shoulder knots, the facings of his uniform, and even the plume of feathers from his hat. During this cruel and unmanly proceeding, which passed almost in an instant, not a single voice was raised; a breathless silence reigned throughout the immense throng. Yet more than five

hundred persons of rank were present; but all, with pale cheek and beating heart, stood motionless around him, the most painful expression of surprise visible in every quivering lip and every muscle of their face. At this trying juncture, while thus bereaving him of his honours, G—— presented a singular, but no despicable picture to the eye; he laughed, but with difficulty could conquer his surprise: it was a laugh such as can only be heard at the gallows tree, in spite of nature and of death. Thousands in his place would have sunk powerless to the earth; his firmer nerves, his unflinching spirit, bore him through, and supported him, while he drained the cup of poison to the dregs.

When this procedure ended, he was conducted, through rows of numberless spectators, to the very extremity of the parade, where a covered carriage was in waiting for him. He was motioned to ascend, an escort of hussars being ready mounted to attend him. Meanwhile, the report of this transaction was spread on all sides: windows were opened, the streets were filled with throngs of curious people pursuing the carriage, and whose mingled cries of triumph, of scorn, or of indignation at what had passed were echoed far and wide—all connected with his name.

At length, however, he escaped the hideous din, though a no less fearful trial now awaited him. The carriage turned out of the high road into a narrow, unfrequented by-way, towards the place of judgment, whither, by command of the Prince, he is borne along at a slow pace. Here, after he had suffered all the torture of anticipated execution, tenfold embittered by its manner, the carriage turned off into a more public path. Exposed to the sultry summer heat, without hearing any accusation, without attendance or consolation, he passed seven heavy and afflicting hours, before he arrived at his place of destination. Late in the evening the carriage stopped; when, deprived of all consciousness, his gigantic strength having at length yielded to twelve hours' fast and consuming thirst, G—— was dragged

like a felon from his seat. On again returning to life, he found himself consigned to a subterranean dungeon, dimly lighted by the rising moon, which cast its sickly rays from a height of nineteen fathoms through a few grated openings, admitting also the cold air from above. Near him he finds a portion of coarse bread, with a vessel of water, and a heap of straw for his couch. He endured this situation without any interruption, until noon the ensuing day, when he heard a sash of one of the iron windows in the centre of the tower drawn aside; two hands were visible, lowering down a basket, like that which he found containing his food the day before. For the first time since the frightful revolution of his affairs he felt some inclination to inquire into the cause and into the nature of his future destiny. But he received no answer from above; the hands disappeared, and the sash was closed. Thus, without beholding the face, or hearing the voice of a fellow-creature; without the least light thrown upon his destiny, left in utter ignorance both as to the future and the past; never feeling the warmth of the sun nor the freshness of the air; remote from human aid and human compassion; he numbered in this frightful abode four hundred and ninety long and heavy days, sustained upon a small allowance of coarse bread. The last, too, was provided with that sorrowful monotony on the noon of each day, which, while it sustains life, only renders it more sensible of its utter wretchedness. Yet this was not enough. He one day made a discovery which filled up the measure of his calamity. He recognised the place: it was the same which, in his rage of vengeance against a worthy officer who had had the misfortune to displease him, he himself ordered to be constructed only a few months before, and had even suggested the manner in which it might be rendered more revolting and terrific. He had likewise visited the place only shortly before, in order to witness its completion. What added the last bitter sting to his punishment was that the same officer who had been destined to

occupy it, an aged and meritorious colonel, had just succeeded the late commander of the fortress, and, by a sort of retributive justice, was made the master of his enemy's destiny. He was deprived, as it were, of the last poor comfort, the right of compassionating himself. He knew he did not deserve it; he was to himself an object of disgust and the bitterest self-contempt—a feeling of all others the hardest to support by a haughty mind—to depend wholly upon the magnanimity of a foe to whom he had shown none.

His gaoler was, fortunately for him, a man of noble feelings, who scorned to take a mean revenge. He felt sorry at the idea of fulfilling the part assigned him; yet, as a faithful subject and an old soldier, he did not think himself justified in departing from the usual rules, and he feared to swerve from his instructions. Still he pitied him, and pointed him out to a benevolent assistant, the preacher of the prison, who, having been able to ascertain nothing beyond mere report against the prisoner, resolved, as far as possible, to mitigate his sufferings. This excellent man, whose name I unwillingly suppress, believed he could in no way better fulfil his pious charge than by bestowing his spiritual support and consolations upon a being deprived of all other hopes of mercy.

As he could not obtain permission from the commandant himself to visit the prisoner, he cheerfully proceeded to the capital, in order to solicit personally the Prince's consent. He fell at his feet, appealing for some mitigation of the poor captive's sufferings; destitute of the aids of religion, never denied to the worst of felons, pining in solitude, and perhaps on the brink of madness or despair. With perfect confidence and sincerity, he then insisted, in the name of his pious calling, on free admittance to the prisoner, whom he claimed as a penitent, and for whose soul he was responsible. His subject made him eloquent; and he already began to make some impression upon the Prince, who at first had refused his request. Nor did the pious man relinquish his efforts

until he had extorted full permission to visit the wretched prisoner and administer to his spiritual wants.

The first human face G—— saw, after a lapse of sixteen months, was that of his new benefactor. He was eloquent in his gratitude, for he was the only friend he had in the world: in all his prosperity he had never boasted one. The good pastor's was like an angel's visit: it would be impossible to describe his feelings; but from this day forth his tears flowed more freely; he had found a being who sympathised with and compassionated him.

The pastor was filled with horror and astonishment on entering the frightful vault. His eyes sought a human form, and beheld, creeping towards him from one corner, a white and wild-looking living skeleton, his couch resembling rather the den of a beast of prey than a human resting-place. All vital signs seemed fled from his countenance; grief and despair had traced deep furrows there; his beard and nails were grown to a frightful length; his raiment had fallen from about him in tatters; and, for want of water and all means of cleanliness, the air was contaminated around. In this state he found the favourite of fortune; his iron frame had stood proof against the severity of his trial. Almost terrified at the sight, the pastor soon hastened back to the Governor, in order to solicit a second alleviation of his sufferings, without which the first would prove of little avail.

This, however, being in opposition to the strict letter of the Governor's instructions, the noble-minded being resolved on a second journey to the capital, in the hope of obtaining some further concessions from the Prince. He declares that he cannot, without violating the sacred character of the sacrament, administer it to a wretch who has been deprived of the exterior resemblance of a human being. In this object, too, the good man succeeded; and, from that day forth, for the first time, the prisoner might be said to receive a new existence.

Many years, however, subsequent, G—— was condemned to languish in captivity, though of a less revolting character than what he had previously suffered; more especially after the short summer of the new favourite's reign was passed, and others succeeded in his place, who either possessed more humanity or had no motive for revenge. Yet ten years expired before the hour of his delivery approached, without any judicial investigation or any formal acquittal. He was presented with his freedom as a sort of princely gift; being, at the same time, requested to banish himself for ever from his native country. But here the oral traditions, which I have been able to collect respecting his history, begin to fail; and I find myself compelled to omit an intervening period of about twenty years. During the interval he entered upon his military career afresh, in foreign service; which at last brought him, by combined industry and skill, to a pitch of greatness equal to what he had formerly attained in his native land. Time, likewise, finally a friend to the unfortunate, which ever makes slow but sure approaches to decrees of justice, took some retributive acts upon itself. The Prince's days of passion and of pleasure were over; humanity gradually resumed its sway over him, and when his hair became blanched and he trembled over the brink of the grave, the friend of his early youth appeared to him and constantly haunted his rest. In order to repair, as far as he yet could, the injuries which he had heaped upon him, the Prince, with friendly expressions, invited the banished man to revisit his native land, which for some time past he had eagerly longed to do. The meeting was extremely trying, though apparently warm and cordial, as if they had only separated a few days before. The Prince looked earnestly, as if trying to recall features so well known and yet so strange to him; he appeared as if numbering the deep furrows which he had himself so cruelly traced there. But nowhere, in that aged, grief-worn countenance, could he recognise the features of his

early companion and friend. The welcome and the look of mutual confidence were evidently forced on both sides; mutual shame and dread had virtually separated their hearts—to meet no more. A single look, which brought back to the Prince's soul the full sense of his guilty precipitancy and violence, hurt the Prince; while G—— felt that he could no longer entertain any regard for the author of his misfortunes.

Yet in a short time G—— was reinstated in all his ancient honours and authority, the Prince attempting to salve his conscience by vanquishing his dislike and showering upon him the most splendid favours, as some remuneration for what had passed. Never, however, could he win back the sincere goodwill and attachment which had once distinguished him; his heart was closed to all the enjoyments of life. Could he restore him the years of hope and happiness of which he had deprived him, or bestow the shadow of pleasure on old age, which only seemed to mock the real energies and delights of life which he had formerly extinguished?

G—— continued in possession of this clear, unruffled evening of his days during nineteen years: neither had fate nor time quenched the fire of passion, nor wholly obscured the lively humour and spirit of his character. In his seventieth year he was still in pursuit of the shadow of a blessing which he really possessed when he was only twenty. He at length died, being then Governor of a fortress for the confinement of State prisoners. One would have naturally expected that he would have conducted himself with humanity, the value of which he had so sensibly experienced, towards his unfortunate fellow creatures. Nothing of the kind! he treated them with harshness and ill-temper; so much so, that in his eightieth year a sudden fit of passion into which he threw himself against one of his prisoners deprived him of his existence.

MORITZ ERDMANN ENGEL

(Born 1767)

I

THE ANTI-SPECULATOR

(Translated by Thomas Roscoe)

There was once a very reputable citizen of the name of Mr. Joseph Teinne. He was at one time a man of considerable landed property, which, upon symptoms of agricultural depression, he had converted into a large monied capital, upon the interest of which he contrived to live. Thus secured against a fall of prices, he began to indulge, as he grew older, a violent antipathy to all species of gambling and speculation of every kind. Indeed, the mere word, with the whole of its dangerous relatives and derivatives—whether bulls or bears, mines or consols—had such an effect upon his mind that he sometimes appeared to be labouring under a temporary derangement of his affairs. He had, some time before, deposited a large sum in the concern of one of his most particular friends; but this he now very suddenly withdrew, and along with it, of course, the particular friendship subsisting between the parties, his friend having happened, in the simplicity of his heart, to communicate some excellent speculation which he had in view.

The same feeling extended even to his politics; he heard that the French Government, whose cause he had before advocated on all occasions, meditated some speculative

views upon Egypt; and forthwith he changed sides, and went over to the Allies. He likewise refused to subscribe a single sixpence for the erection of a new parsonage house in the good parish of St. Paul's, merely on account of the Rector having mentioned his intention of adding to it a Speculum or Observatory (for, in fact, he was a much better astronomer than preacher), a plan to which the rest of the parishioners had consented.

He next determined to make his will, while of sound mind, being desirous of leaving the whole of his property to his nephew, a steady, plodding young fellow, at the expense of his two sons, who were of a very different disposition. To make such a transfer the more sure, he went to consult a certain Doctor Glau, of legal celebrity, who replied to his singular communication as follows:—

"But have you maturely considered the matter, my dear Mr. Teinne? Such a measure ought to possess strong arguments to back it, or the validity of your will might be brought in question after your departure. Yes, sir, even wholly set aside."

"What! do you imagine my will can ever be invalidated by my own sons?" cried Mr. Teinne, indignantly—"let them do it at their risk."

"But you will be safely disposed of, my good friend; they will bury you first, Mr. Teinne."

"Then there's an end to all subordination, and that is the difficulty—first bury me, and then go and invalidate my will! But we must take some measures, Mr. Glau, we must take measures accordingly; and I trust you will be able to provide."

"Why," replied Mr. Glau, "you must give good reasons for refusing to bequeath your property to your own children, that is all. Show us some sound, conclusive arguments."

"Undoubtedly, most assuredly I can," interrupted Mr. Teinne, "and you will find them well-founded too, Doctor, as I know to my cost." Here he greatly resembled the

Knight of the Rueful Countenance; he adjusted his velvet cap again and again, with a sort of nervous agitation, while his face continued to lengthen as he pronounced the names of his sons. "Yes, my sons, Doctor—if I must let you into the entire secret of all our quarrels and miseries—my sons, young headstrong rascals, as they are, have ventured to speculate, sir."

"Speculate! And what of all that?" repeated Glau.

"What of all that! What of all that! Why, Doctor, you surprise me: I fancy you are not inclined to speculate, are you, Doctor, in your profession? Do you belong to the company, Doctor—a speculator—hey?"

"A speculator! No, Mr. Teinne, the Lord forbid! Not I. I am no castle-builder—no acronaut, sir, I assure you. I am a plain man, one who likes to follow his nose and walk upon solid ground, Mr. Teinne."

"And Heaven long preserve you, then, in so noble a resolution! And no fool will catch you hazarding your neck for his amusement; like that silly adventurer who conceived that pretty piece of speculation, you know, of transporting himself to England across the Channel. . . ."

"Say no more, say no more, Mr. Teinne! I grow dizzy at the mere mention of the subject; seized with an involuntary ague fit. Pray let us confine ourselves to the present question. You wish to disinherit your sons. Very good. But what valid objections have you to insert in your last will and testament against them?"

"What but their infernal rage for speculation, Doctor! Their ungovernable folly, which leads them to imagine they are greater wiseacres than their fathers, and meddle with adventures they do not in the least understand. The truth is, sir, they have clean overstepped the bounds of moderation and common-sense; such little as they received from nature, and to which they ought to have confined their active labours and exertions. They left their native sphere; and my eldest son, as I dare say you must have heard——"

"Oh, yes!" interrupted the Counsellor—"that he was compelled to decamp;—he was—I mean his affairs were deranged."

"Right, exactly so. But whence do you suppose the evil originated? He was in an excellent concern—a very desirable, very profitable one, sir;—and it only wanted tolerable good management. He had the whole of his mother's jointure, and a very pretty capital from his father, in addition to it, sir; his connections were as respectable as heart could wish, and he had a host of customers and chapmen at his beck. Respectable, did I say? Nay, between friends, Counsellor, his transactions were always snug; his drafts upon houses were sure, cocksure. Never required, sir, to deal with Polish Jews; no, nor with Russians either."

"Then how the deuce came it to pass, Mr. Teinne, that your son failed? It must have been really very difficult. Indeed, it surprised both me and the commercial world at large not a little. His establishment was not expensive. Pray how could he contrive it?"

"Contrive it with a vengeance! He had his head full of prodigious speculations—quite prodigious, sir. He might have continued to live long and happily with his family, here, in Europe; but, no, forsooth, he must go and invest the whole of his ready cash in lands; exported it, sir, by all that's mad, to North America, upon speculation."

"Indeed! Do you mean that he actually sent his money to North America?" cried the Counsellor, amazed.

"I have a shrewd suspicion he did; and he likewise speculated upon paying a visit shortly after to his fair and flourishing principality."

"Principality, say you, Mr. Teinne? You surprise me!"

"Yet it is true, Mr. Glau; nothing less than a principality. Do you suppose his grand, comprehensive schemes would grasp at anything less? He wished to purchase vast domains, a track of country embracing about thirty square miles; much more, in fact, than many principalities have

to boast of. Had there only been one living being to every square mile, or even a single blade of corn, enough to afford a full hearty meal to a country house, there might have been some ground for hope! As it is——" And he lifted up his eyes.

"It is a chapter of miracles," replied the Counsellor.

"A chapter of accidents, dismal accidents, you should have said, Mr. Glau," replied the old citizen. "At least it was no miracle to me; for the evil, sir, was hereditary on his mother's side; she was *speculative*, you understand me. A sore affliction, sir. But, in general, I believe folly and madness are found to be hereditary."

"What, Mr. Teinne," replied the Counsellor, "do you really mean to allude to your dear, departed lady?"

"Why, Doctor, what would you have me say? I tell you that, though my eldest son fancied himself somewhat hampered for room in Europe, the world itself appeared too narrow for the aspiring intellect of my deceased wife. She was so completely absorbed in eternal speculations, or speculations upon eternity, that our whole domestic economy was neglected—in fact, I was deprived of every matrimonial comfort during this my painful pilgrimage upon the earth. The odour of sanctity was so great that it completely overpowered me."

"There now, Mr. Teinne, I can sympathise with you, my late dear wife being likewise afflicted in the manner you describe."

"So be it! and Heaven rest their souls," said Mr. Teinne.

"Heaven's will be done!" rejoined the Counsellor, "Amen! To return to our question, the case of your youngest son, the Aulic Counsellor, Mr. Teinne, gives me the most uneasiness. For, if I am rightly informed, he has obtained for himself some reputation."

"Reputation, with a vengeance! Luckily, I have been undeceived on this point by our good Dean. He has let me

into the meaning of this reputation—reputation forsooth!—such as it is. To attract the admiration of a set of raw juveniles is no very difficult affair, as I daresay you know, Counsellor. But let me see him win golden opinions from wise men. Listen to me, Doctor; and remember, it is only between friends—so do not let it take wind among babblers, and become a feast for fools, town fools, of all people in the world: let it rest, let it rest. But, as I say, the Dean of our Chapter showed me one of his publications the other day; and I had no sooner got through it than I was quite alarmed, confounded, Doctor!"

"How so, alarmed, Mr. Teinne?"

"Yes, and well I might; it contained such inconceivable nonsense—such as could never have entered the skull of a sensible man or, indeed, of any man. For the young gentleman not only finds Europe too narrow for him, like his elder brother, or this long vale of tears, like his more pious mother—the whole creation is too little, and his infinite faculties have invented a system—a transmundane system—which engrosses his whole soul."

"He is far beyond my comprehension, then, I confess," said the Counsellor. "I cannot imagine—I never heard of such a system. What sort of one can it be?"

"What sort, forsooth! As far as I can gather, all his brother's American tracts are nothing to this tract of his. They are Elysian Fields compared with his invisible world of his own creation. His brother still sticks to solid ground, though not very productive—he has a sun to shine, air to breathe, and things to revive his animal functions. But this poor devil has reduced himself to such a state of absolute destitution and forlorn hope that he does not allow himself so much as a bare inch of space, or a second of time, or a particle of earth, which he does not first borrow from his beggared, bankrupt reason."

"This is quite unintelligible to me. Give me a case, something *gratiâ exempli*, if you please," said Mr. Glau.

"To be sure I will, as far as I can recollect," said the other. "For instance, you perhaps imagine that this said corporeal substance you are at the trouble of carrying about with you is a body."

"To be sure I do."

"You perhaps farther flatter yourself that you have a head, Mr. Counsellor; a heart, hands, and legs—you have laboured at least under that delusion."

"How the devil! Surely he would not try to argue me out of my senses."

"He would, though," cried Mr. Teinne, with a woeful expression of face; "he would convince you that you had no sense at all."

"Would he so?" exclaimed the lawyer: "not in a hurry."

"Yes, he would tell you not to deceive yourself, that it might be all a dream. It may be your dream, or that of some other person—it comes to the same thing; for you cannot by any means make yourself sure of your existence."

"Heaven have mercy upon us!" cried the lawyer. "Can my young learned friend be in his senses?"

"A philosopher to be out of his senses, indeed! The Lord forbid!" cried Mr. Teinne. "It is only your idea. Still, you must not actually despair of life; for as long as my son exists he will supply you, I doubt not, with some scheme or other to preserve vitality."

"Upon my word," replied the Counsellor, "such a delusion looks very serious, not to say alarming."

"Indeed, you are right there, I suspect. But, you know, he has only to cogitate in downright earnest, and he can soon bring us—though perhaps not his wits—into existence."

"But I am an old man. Will he make me anew?"

"Oh, he can perform far greater miracles than that! Why, sir, in this manner he can create sun and moon and stars—everything is the offspring of his thought, and so he can

create you or his own father. His reasoning powers resemble the little box in possession of old grannum Nixus.[1]

"Let him only whirl it round sufficiently, and make a few incantations, and he will make anything bounce out of his pericranium that he pleases. I have a shrewd suspicion that he will one time or other be inventing a small bedlam for himself, where, should his father happen to see him, he will fancy or dream that he is overwhelmed with anguish."

"Indeed, Mr. Teinne, your case is peculiarly trying. You are greatly to be pitied. But what does your son imagine will become of this mundane system after his departure?"

"Why," said Mr. Teinne, "he will perhaps think that people will say that it did once exist."

"Very strange! One would fancy it made of more durable stuff."

"Yet we need apprehend nothing. He can create a fresh generation of necromancers, and teach them how to sport their reason, as you whirl round a dice box."

"So in that way everything may be continued on its ancient footing, which is what I wish. To speak frankly, Mr. Teinne, I had some scruples at first as to the propriety of cutting off your sons in your will; but I now find that property could not be safely entrusted into such hands. If you please, I will proceed to execute your will further."

"Do so, good Doctor," replied his friend, "and when it is finished, and the witnesses are in readiness, and the whole signed and sealed, let my death happen when it will, I shall be contented. For the calamity of my sons has rather embittered my existence; one dunning my ears with his American speculations, and the other with speculations upon the invisible world. One has lost all he had in the world; and the other, I find, has cruelly deprived himself of the small portion of common-sense which nature gave him."

[1] Alluding to a description of its powers contained in a story of Musæus, entitled "The Nymph of the Fountain."—Ed.

MORITZ ERDMANN ENGEL

(Born 1767)



II

TOBY WILT

One of the chief ornaments of a little provincial town, his native place, flourished Mr. Toby Wilt. At no period had he evinced a desire to travel, and never, on any occasion, exceeded his prescribed limits round the adjacent hamlets. In spite of this, however, he knew more of the world than many who had travelled a great deal farther, and some who had expended the best part of their fortune on a fashionable trip to Paris or Italy. He was possessed of a rich fund of little anecdotes of the most useful class, which he had obtained by observation, and retailed for his own and his friends' edification. And though these showed no great stretch of genius or invention, they possessed considerable practical merit, and were, for the most part, remarkable for coming before company, coupled together, always two and two.

Among his acquaintance was a careful young gentleman of the name of Till, a great admirer of Mr. Toby Wilt for his known prudence and stock of observations. On one occasion he ventured to express his high opinion of them, to which his old friend replied in his stuttering style, "Ha! hem?—what, do you indeed think me such a wiseacre, then?"

"Why, all the world says so, Mr. Wilt; and I should be glad to become your pupil."

"Would you so, young man? Nothing more easy. If you really wish to become a prudent youth, in fact, you have only to study the conduct and deportment of fools."

"In what manner do you mean?"

"What manner! By trying to act differently; to be sure."

"May I beg an anecdote, or example, for the sake of illustration?"

"I believe I can accommodate you with one, Mr. Till. When I was a young man, there resided in this town a Mr. Veit, an old mathematician—rather a meagre and morose sort of personage. I used often to see him walking about, muttering to himself as he went along, and never stopping to salute any of his neighbours and acquaintance; much less would he look them in the face and converse with them, being always too earnestly engaged in solving the problem of his own perfections. Now what do you suppose, Mr. Till, that people were in the habit of saying of him?"

"Most probably that he was a very shrewd, wise old gentleman," said Mr. Till.

"No, you are somewhat on the wrong side; they called him an old fool. So, so! I used to think within myself—for this sort of title, however general, was not at all to my taste—I must take care how I imitate my old friend Mr. Veit. I see that will never do; one must not appear to be too full of oneself. Perhaps it is not well-bred, at all events, to go muttering with one's self; I see we must be more sociable, and talk a little to our neighbours. Let me hear your notion on the subject, Mr. Till; did I judge rightly?"

"Oh, indisputably; I think you were in the right."

"Nay, I am not so sure of that; not exactly so, as you will find. For we had another genius, a finical kind of personage, and a dancing-master, the very converse of the old postulating mathematician; and yet he did not please, though he used to stare in everybody's face as he skipped along. He was glad to talk to every one who would listen to him, as long

as their patience lasted. Well, Mr. Till, and what do you suppose peopled used to say of *him?*"

"Most likely they would call him a wild, merry sort of fellow; somewhat of a bore withal."

"There you are not so very wide of the mark, Mr. Till; for they called him a fool. You see, he won the same title by a very opposite kind of merit. Here's for us! I thought to myself; this is odd enough. What must one do? How in the world must one contrive to win the reputation of a wise man? It is plain one must take neither Mr. Veit nor Mr. Slight for our model. No, first of all, Mr. Till, you must look persons full in the face and salute them like the dancing-master, and then you must have your eyes upon yourself and reflect seriously; talk with your neighbours, like Mr. Slight, and think of your own affairs afterwards, like Mr. Veit. That was my mode of arguing, Mr. Till. I compounded the gentleman, sir: people called me a prudent, long-headed fellow; and this is the whole of the mystery."

On another occasion our prudent citizen received a visit from a young merchant of the name of Flau. He, too, came to consult; and, after making some wry faces, he began to lament the extent of his losses and misfortunes.

"Well," replied old Wilt, giving him a tap on the shoulder, "and what does all this amount to? You must be on the alert, sir, and pursue fortune more diligently. She is a shy bird; and you must be on the look-out, like a sportsman."

"So I have, my dear sir, this long time past, but all to no purpose. One unlucky blow followed another, till I was fairly tripped up by the heels. For the future, I shall fold my arms, and rest quietly at home."

"In that you are wrong again, young gentleman; you must be on the look-out, I tell you; you need only to have a care how you carry your head."

"How I carry my head?" repeated Mr. Flau. "What do you mean, Mr. Wilt, by that?"

"Only what I say; you must have a care how you carry

your head, and the rest will follow of course. Let me explain how. When my left-hand neighbour was employed in building his new house, the whole street was paved with bricks and beams and rubbish, not very pleasant to pass over. Now one day, who should happen to be going that way but our worthy mayor, Mr. Trick, then a young fashionable alderman. He always carried his head high, and thus he came skipping along, with his arms dangling by his side and his nose elevated towards the clouds. Yet the next moment he found himself sprawling upon the ground; he had contrived to trip up his own heels, to break one of his legs, and obtain the advantage of limping to the end of his days, as you may often see Do you take—do you comprehend me, Mr. Flau?"

"Perhaps you allude to the old proverb, 'Take heed not to carry your head too high.'"

"To be sure, but you must likewise contrive not to carry it too low; faults on both sides! If you have borne it too high, don't bear it now too low; you comprehend me? and you will do yet.

"Not long afterwards, Mr. Schale, the poet, was passing the same dangerous way, Mr. Flau. He was, perhaps, spouting verses, or brooding over his *res angustæ domi*—I know not which; but he came jogging forwards with a woeful aspect, 'eyes bent on earth,' and a stooping, slouching gait, as if he would be glad to lower himself into the ground, sir. Well, he walked over one of the ropes; smack it went, and one of the great beams came tumbling about his ears from the scaffolding above. But he was too miserable a dog to be killed; he unluckily escaped; but was so terrified and nervous—poor devil!—with the shock, that he fainted away, fell sick, and was confined to his garret for several weeks. Do you comprehend my meaning yet, Mr. Flau? How would you carry your head when you passed?".

"I! I would keep it in just equilibrium, to be sure."

"True; we must not cast our eye too ambitiously towards

the clouds, nor fix it too demurely upon the ground. Whether we look above, around, or before us, Mr. Flau, let us do it in a calm, becoming sort of manner, and then we shall get on in the world, and no accidents will be likely to befall us. Let us preserve our equanimity: you comprehend me? Good morning, Mr. Flau."

On a third occasion, a certain Mr. Wills waited upon his friend Mr. Wilt for the purpose of borrowing a sum of money to complete some little speculation he had in hand.

"It is quite a prudent step; very sure," he said to old Mr. Wilt, "though I am sensible it is not one of your lucrative speculations; but, as it happens to come very *apropos*, I should like to turn it to account, and make the most of it."

Old Wilt did not much relish this style of salutation, and seeing whither it would lead:

"Pray, my dear Mr. Wills," inquired he, "how much money, do you think, will serve your turn?"

"It is nothing much of a sum, a mere trifle—some hundred dollars will suffice."

"So! If it be no more, I will directly comply with your request. Indeed, to show how much I have your interest at heart, I will also present you with something else, which, between ourselves, is worth more than a thousand dollars."

"Ah! pray explain yourself, my dear Mr. Wilt."

"Nay, it is only a short story; but it will serve our turn. In my younger days, I had rather an eccentric kind of man for my neighbour, a Mr. Grell. He had continually a certain cant phrase at his tongue's end, which at last proved his ruin."

"You surprise me! I should like to know it."

"You shall. When any of his acquaintance used casually to accost him, observing, 'Well, Grell, how does business go on? How much did you clear by your last bargain?' 'Pshaw!' he would say, 'a mere trifle—some fifty dollars or so, but what of that?' Then again when he was asked:

'Well, Grell, how much are you minus by the last bankruptcy?' 'Pshaw!' he would answer, 'it is not worth speaking of; a mere trifle, some five per cent.' Now, though Grell was a warm man in his day, I can assure you this cursed foolish phrase of his brought him to ruin. He was at length compelled to decamp, sir, bag and baggage. What was the sum, Mr. Wills, which you stated?"

"I think I requested the loan of one hundred dollars."

"Exactly so; but my memory is growing treacherous. Well, Mr. Wills, but I had another neighbour, one Mr. Tomms, a corn-dealer. By means of another sort of saying did that man build the fine mansion you see yonder, with all its offices and warehouses to boot, sir. What say you?"

"I say it is very strange, indeed, Mr. Wilt: I have a great curiosity to hear this second phrase."

"You shall, Mr. Wills. Why, when his friends accosted him, 'Well, Mr. Tomms, how does business proceed? What cleared you by your last concern?' 'A good round sum—a hundred, that I did!' was his invariable answer, at the same time you might see that he was in high glee. When they perceived, on the other hand, that he was low, very low in spirits, they would inquire: 'What is the matter, Mr. Tomms? How much have you lost?' 'No joke indeed! a good round sum—some fifty dollars, I assure you.' Now this man began his career with a very small capital; but, as I told you before, he has built that large house with all its offices, I say, and warehouses round it. Now, Mr. Wills, which of these two phrases seems best suited to your taste?"

"Why the last of them, Mr. Wilt, of course."

"Yet," replied old Wilt, "this Mr. Tomms does not quite suit me. He had the knack of saying 'A good round sum,' to be sure, even when he was paying his poor rates or his taxes. Then, I think, he ought to have employed, like a humane and loyal man, the saying of my other neighbour—'a mere trifle, nothing worth speaking of.' The truth is, Mr. Wills, that as they were both my near neighbours I

carefully preserved both their phrases, and apply them according to the circumstances of time and place, sometimes speaking like Mr. Grell, and at others like Mr. Tomms."

"Not so with me," cried Mr. Wills; "I admire Mr. Tomms' phrase; I do from my soul, sir."

"What was your demand—the sum you have occasion for, Mr. Wills?"

"A good round sum of money—one hundred dollars: no trifle, my dear Mr. Wilt!"

"There you talk like a man of sense—a very prudent man, Mr. Wills: you have really learned your monied catechism very well. Your answer was quite correct. Had you come to request really only a small trifle, I might perhaps have listened to you; but, as you observe it is a good round sum, allow me to pause. I wish you a good morning, Mr. Wills." But, having thus amused himself, old Mr. Wilt lent him the sum of money.

CASPAR FRIEDRICH GOTTSCHALCK

(BORN 1772)

NOTBURGA

(Translated by THOMAS ROSCOE)

NEAR the river Neckar stands a city of the name of Hornberg, which centuries ago was distinguished for its splendour as the courtly residence of one of our emperors. Its towers even now stand firm, and its walls may long continue to bid defiance to the winds and rains of heaven. The sovereign who formerly swayed its territories had a daughter whose name was Notburga. She was a beautiful creature, of a fine and attractive figure, whose power was fully felt by Count Otto, to whom she had pledged her troth, but who was compelled to leave her side to fight in a foreign land. Long she sighed and awaited his return; he came no more, and she sat alone in her chamber, or gazed from her balcony, whence she had caught a last view of him, for hours, morning, day, and evening—even till midnight she was still to be seen there. She fixed her eyes upon the towering forests, or upon the waters of the Neckar that rolled below, or gazed upon the stilly heavens till tears blinded her sight. The calm of midnight brought no repose for her; and when the wind sang loudest through the trellis, and thunder clouds darkened the face of heaven, she would still linger there; her sighs escaped upon the breeze, and her tears fell with the raindrops upon the earth.

Her cheek grew paler and paler, yet no one seemed to

observe it, her beauty was still peerless, and none saw the worm that consumed it.

One day came the Emperor her father, and thus with his deep, stern voice he addressed the fair Notburga:

"Haste, and prepare thy bridal dress; in three days thy bridegroom will be at hand!"

He said no more, waited no reply, and left her. The Princess sank upon her couch, and closed her eyes in pain. At night she resumed her solitary place in the balcony, and as she fixed her eyes upon the darkening heavens, her tears fell faster than before. "My Otto, my Otto," she exclaimed, "thou hast indeed forgotten me, for ever left thy fond and faithful Burga. Alas! what cruel rival clasps thee in her arms, or is thine heart grown colder in a land where the sun sheds his warmest rays? Perhaps thou hast fallen by the sword, and takest thine everlasting rest under the green turf of another land, and the yellow primroses I gave are all faded on thy breast. Ah, that I were with thee there, and slumbering at thy side! It is my sadder fate to bow my head like a bruised reed before the storm that every blast threatens to level with the dust. My heart is heavy, and my cheek is already blanched, yet ill betide my splendid doom! I must sit among the bridal guests, myself a bride; a bride, and my Otto far distant from my side! Would that my spirit dare yet prove firm and true, that I might fly, like the dove, into some far wilderness, far from the eye of man, where I would spend my days in holy thoughts of heaven and thee, my Otto, and nourished only with my dear Redeemer's love!"

Thus wept and prayed the chastened, broken-hearted girl, uncertain whither to turn for advice or help. She dreaded to encounter the fierce displeasure of her father; she only felt that she loved her long-lost Otto tenderly; and yet he came not in her utter need; during twelve long months had sent no token of his love or of his existence.

One night an old and faithful domestic, Gaspar, heard

her bitter lamentation beneath her window. Touched with compassion he called to her, and promised to convey her whithersoever she desired. His voice shot a ray of comfort through her soul; she rose, she wiped away her tears, and the same hour was on her way from her royal father's Castle. Rapidly did she speed over the wooded heights around it, in order to take refuge in the chapel of St. Michael, under protection of an ancient and pious anchorite. From him she hoped to receive advice in her extreme wretchedness, how she could possibly escape from the hated alliance with the pagan prince, which her cruel father proposed to her.

Scarcely, however, had she attained the wooded height which led to his dwelling, accompanied by her faithful Gaspar, when there sprang along the heath before her a white hind, and Notburga recognized the pretty animal which Otto had once caught and tamed for her, and which had now appeared to its young mistress in her flight. It gazed wistfully in her face, and the lady's eyes beamed with pleasure at this instance of fidelity, as if she had met with some dear friend. She kissed the gentle creature with tenderness, and with thoughts that were full of Otto, and wept and smiled as she again threw herself into the same saddle where Otto had so often placed her. The moment she appeared ready to proceed, the favourite roe bounded across the path and disappeared with her, away with the speed of light among the thick forest trees.

There stood the old and faithful Gaspar; he tried to follow, but his limbs refused their office; he called, but his voice trembled and he could not be heard. As he thus stood, desirous yet unable to afford relief, he cast his eyes down towards the Neckar, and saw the hind spring boldly into its waves. Away it swam towards the opposite shore, and in the moonlight he saw the white veil of the fair Notburga waving over the waters in the breeze. Again he saw her safe on the other shore; but they soon disap-

peared once more amid the shades that enveloped the sides of the mountain.

When her father awoke on the ensuing morning his first thought dwelt upon his daughter, to whom that day he intended to present the rich jewels and other ornaments left by her deceased mother. In these she was to appear on her bridal day; thenceforward they were to be her own. He sent to summon her to his presence; she was nowhere to be found. Her chamber was deserted. The garden, the bower, the favourite walk and tree were all examined in vain; and in vain proved all her father's inquiries from his numerous train of followers; no one had seen, no one knew the path she had taken. At length he came to Gaspar, but Gaspar dreaded his fierce lord, and he placed himself among his fellow servants, bowed down as he was with age, declaring that he knew nothing.

Messengers were then despatched on all sides along the banks of the Neckar, and over the mountains, but they brought no tidings of the lost Princess. Next he himself mounted horse, and sent forth a fresh train of servants to make researches in all the hamlets and cities, even to the gates of Castle Minneberg, and many knights of the district joined his party, leading him to the inmost fastnesses of the rocks and mountains, and into the most secluded thickets of their forests, yet no traces of the lady's flight were to be seen.

But just as the tower clock of Hornberg tolled the hour of noon, and the aged Gaspar was standing in his window, suddenly Notburga's hind came bounding into the court, and approaching the spot gazed wistfully up. "Alas," thought Gaspar, "thou look'st mournfully, poor thing! Would thou could'st tell what thou art in need of; I would fain give thee help!" He went in, took some bread from the table, and approached nearer the tame white hind. But she hung down her head, presented her horns, and stood quite still.

"Well, what am I to think of this," said Gaspar, smiling, as he considered what it could be that the poor animal meant. At length he said, "Suppose I stick this piece of loaf upon your horn; they say a loaf is better than a feather in one's cap;" and he fixed the bread upon the end of one of its horns. Upon this the hind suddenly rose, and bounded away at speed towards the Neckar.

At the same hour on the ensuing day, as Gaspar stood at his window, again the hind presented herself in the same entreating position. Upon her head he found a large oak-leaf bound with a ribband, which his wife recognised as one of the Princess's garters. Her name was upon it in gold letters, and upon the oak-leaf there appeared in needle-work these words: "To God all praise! Notburga thanks the giver for manna sent her in the desert." When Gaspar and his wife Alice had with difficulty made out these words, the eyes of the old man overflowed with tears. "So our pretty hind had carried her bread," cried Gaspar. "And Heaven be good unto us," added his wife, "that the lovely Princess in the desert should be nourished with our broken bread!!" She then ran and, taking a boiled fowl, she wrapped it up and bound it with the ribband as before, and away went the hind up the mountain and over the river; nor appeared again until two days after. This it repeated from time to time, often bringing a note of thanks, and always returning with a supply of food.

Time passed away; her father had again returned home from his campaigns, and had heard nothing relating to his daughter. He never dreamed that she could have reached the opposite shore of the Neckar, for there was no kind of conveyance, far and wide; while the lordly bride-groom with his splendid train was compelled to wend his way home again, without his beauteous bride. The cuckoo had already ceased his note that began at the time of Not-burga's flight, and the nightingale's song was still. Month after month had flown, when for the first time the Prince

cast his eye upon the tame white hind. Observing its frequent returns, and its station under old Gaspar's window, he went to his ancient domestic and inquired as to the appearance of the animal, and why it was then decked out in the manner he saw. Perceiving the old man's confusion, with fierce threats he extorted a confession of all he knew; while the Prince seized the packet of fruit plucked from Notburga's favourite garden which hung round the hind's neck.

Speedily did he summon his knights and pages to horse. Away went the hind and away rode the horsemen in pursuit. The eye of the Prince was upon her as she sprang into the Neckar. He urged his steed, boldly took the water, and was followed by his trusty knights. The hind disappeared on the other side among the thick shrubs, but the fiery Prince was not far behind. He marked her path, and was near enough to see her dart suddenly into a cave. He then threw himself from his horse and, followed by a few knights, he hastened after, and beheld his daughter kneeling with folded hands before a crucifix, with which the faithful Gaspar had supplied her, and the white hind reposing near her on a bed of moss. Her father uttered a cry of fear as she gazed on him with death-pale looks; for never had the sun's beam lightened up her face since the hour when the white hind had borne her to the spot.

Then for the first time he spoke in mild accents to his child; he besought her to listen to him, to accompany him back to the Castle, and be more fondly cherished by him than before.

But the pale, sad girl replied, "I have confided in the living God, and no longer wish for the society of mankind." When her father attempted to remove her objections, she invariably repeated the same words; and when, unable to vanquish her resolution with gentle means, he suddenly gave way to his stormy passion, threatening to compel her return, she seized hold of her crucifix. Snatching her other hand

with a sudden jerk, her arm was torn asunder from her body, and rested in her angry father's grasp. Overwhelmed with astonishment and remorse, he rushed out of the place, followed by his affrighted train. None of them was again desirous of visiting the lady's cave or even of approaching that side of the river.

From this time the name of the forlorn lady was honoured by the people like that of a saint, and when penitents came to visit the holy hermit near the chapel of St. Michael, he sent the pilgrims to the cave of the chaste Notburga, and the fair saint never refused to join in prayer with them for their sins, and they always bent their way home with lighter and better hearts.

In autumn when the leaves began to fall, and Notburga's dying hour approached, a group of cherubs are believed to have surrounded the spot, and entered into the lady's cave. They bore her, yet breathing, into the air, and laid the crucifix upon her breast. She opened her eyes once more upon the heavens, fixed them absorbed in dying tenderness for some moments, and while a soft rapture lighted up her features, she murmured, "Yes, my Otto, I see thee beckoning to me; thou art already there. I come!"

Then her chastened soul took its flight. Angels performed the last pious rites: strewed spring flowers, though in autumn, upon her bier; and she was borne by two snow-white steeds that never felt the yoke, over the river, without even wetting their hoofs. The neighbouring steeple clock tolled the solemn hour itself, and by angelic voices her funeral dirge was sung. It was thus her gentle corpse was conveyed to the chapel of St. Michael and there interred.

From this time forth the white hind was no longer seen; no longer conveyed manna to the forlorn lady of the desert, from the hand of the faithful Gaspar; but the tradition of heaven's mysteries still survived.

LUDWIG TIECK

(1773–1853)

I

AUBURN EGBERT

(Translated by THOMAS ROSCOE)

IN the vicinity of the Hartz there once resided a Knight, usually known by the name of Egbert the Fair, or Auburn Egbert. He was about forty years old, of middle stature, and with short auburn hair, which hung thick and close over his pale and somewhat emaciated countenance. He led a very secluded life, never interfered in the affairs of his neighbours, and was seldom seen beyond the precincts of his own Castle walls. His wife was of as retired a disposition as himself; both were warmly attached to each other, and only lamented that their union had not been yet blest with children.

Egbert saw little company, and made still less preparation to entertain his guests when they did come, the strictest frugality being observed throughout his whole establishment. In their presence he was cheerful and affable; but when alone he appeared a prey to a reserved and silent melancholy.

No one was so frequent a visitor at the Castle as Philip Walther, to whom Egbert was greatly attached, from the similarity of their tastes and feelings. His chief residence was in Franconia, though he often sojourned, near half a year at a time, in the vicinity of Egbert's Castle, where he

made collections of plants and fossils, which he arranged for his amusement.

Being possessed of a small property, Walther lived quite independent. He was frequently attended by Egbert in his solitary excursions, owing to which their intimacy appeared to become yearly stronger and stronger.

There are periods in which we all feel more or less uneasy in concealing a secret from those who are dearest to us. The soul feels an irresistible impulse to confide its most treasured thoughts to the breast of some friend—drawing the bonds of mutual confidence still closer. In such moments the inmost recesses of our hearts are laid open; and it sometimes happens that on these occasions we inwardly recoil from each other.

It was in the twilight of a misty autumnal evening, when Egbert, his wife, and friend were seated round the cheerful fire, which cast its flickering lights and shadows through the room and upon the ceiling. The gloom of night was only perceptible in the distance, whence came the sound of the forest trees waving in the cold evening air, the breeze becoming stronger and stronger. Walther complained of weariness after his long walk, and his friend Egbert proposed that he should remain the night with them: they might while away the time in conversation, and then retire to their apartments.

Walther accepted the offer; wine and supper were brought in; they stirred the fire, and by degrees the conversation became more animated and familiar.

Supper being removed, and the servants dismissed, Egbert took his friend Walther by the hand, saying, "Come, you must let my Bertha here relate the history of her early days; you will hear some very extraordinary adventures."

"Oh! with much pleasure," returned Walther; and they resumed their places at the fire.

It was now near midnight; the moon shone at intervals through the fleeting clouds; and Bertha began her tale.

"You must not think me too importunate; but my husband's account of his friend is so flattering, all your thoughts and opinions, he declares, are so elevated, that it would be unjust to disguise anything from you. But you must not regard my narrative in the light of a fiction, however singular you may conceive it.

"I am the native of a little hamlet. My father was only a poor shepherd. The domestic management of our house was none of the most excellent: we hardly knew how to prolong our existence from day to day. But what most grieved me was the incessant bickerings of my parents, arising from their poverty, when they would load each other with the severest reproaches. In regard to myself, I was perpetually reviled for being a dull and silly child, incapable of fulfilling the most simple duties; and, in fact, I was excessively awkward and good for nothing. I broke everything put into my hands, I could learn neither to spin nor to sew, afforded my mother no assistance in the house, and all that I comprehended was the wants of my parents. I used often to sit down in a corner, pleasing myself with the idea of assisting them, should I ever happen to become rich; and enjoying their surprise when I poured showers of gold upon their humble roof.

"Spirits appeared to float around me—to point out subterranean treasures; or presented me with small pebble stones, which were suddenly transformed into diamonds. In truth, I only amused myself with these dreams, which served to render me awkwarder than ever whenever I happened to be called upon to assist in the common affairs of life; for my head began actually to swim with the number of these whimsical notions.

"Of course my father was extremely irritated at having so useless a burthen in his house: he invariably treated me with harshness, and a kind word seldom issued from his lips. In this way I approached my eighth year, and it became a serious question by what means I was to be

taught to do something. Imagining it arose either from caprice or indolence, my father first began by assailing me with dreadful threats. Finding they were all to no purpose, he inflicted a severe personal chastisement; each time concluding with observing that it would be repeated the ensuing day as long as I chose to continue such a good-for-nothing creature.

"My pillow was constantly steeped in tears, and I felt so desolate and wretched that I often prayed to die. I shrunk from the approach of light; I was at a loss how to begin the day; I longed to become as dexterous as other people, and wondered why I was born more stupid than other children—in short, I was in despair.

"I arose one morning early, and without knowing why, opened our cottage door. I found myself in the open field. Soon I was in the wood, which as yet was scarcely lighted up with the approach of day. Still I ran on, without looking once behind me. I felt too much afraid lest my father should overtake me to complain of weariness; for I knew that he would treat me with redoubled cruelty. The sun was mounted high ere I reached the other side of the wood, and I saw some dark object in the distance, veiled in a thick mist. Sometimes I encountered hills, at others paths that wound among the cliffs and rocks. I imagined I was drawing nigh the neighbouring mountains; and the idea, combined with the solitude around, awoke my fears. I had never beheld hills before; even the name of mountains had sounded like something awful in my ears. I had not courage to go back, my very fears giving wings, as it were, to my flight. I often gazed round me in alarm, as I heard the wind whistling through the branches of the trees: I listened to the echo of the woodman's axe in the distance, breaking upon the deep silence of the morning; and soon I met colliers and miners going to their labour, whose foreign accent nearly made me faint with alarm.

"I passed through several villages, begging my bread

as I went along; for hunger and thirst next began to assail me. I contrived to give pretty satisfactory answers to the questions I had to encounter, and by such means wandered three or four days, when I struck into a little bye-path, which led me farther and farther from the main road. The rocks, as I proceeded, appeared to assume still more fantastic forms. Huge crags were piled upon each other so high that the least wind seemed enough to hurl them from their airy height. I knew not whither to turn my steps. I had hitherto reposed in the open woods—occasionally in the shepherds' huts, it being the mildest season of the year; but here I met with no human abode—a wilderness lay before me, and the rocky heights appeared to grow more and more terrific. Often I passed close under overhanging precipices, or at the edge of the yawning abyss. I felt all the horror of my deserted situation: I shed silent tears—and then I screamed aloud; but my voice was re-echoed only from the dark rocky valley, adding fresh terror to all I had before felt. Night was gathering round; and I now sought to find some mossy bed on which to rest. Yet I could not sleep: I was haunted by the most unaccountable sounds, which I successively attributed to the cry of wild beasts, the wind moaning through the rocks, or the note of some strange and unknown birds.

"I now prayed fervently, and towards morning for the first time fell asleep. When I awoke the sun was shining in my face. A steep cliff rose before me, which I climbed, in the hope of finding some outlet from that horrid wilderness and of discerning, perhaps, signs of some human habitation. On gaining the summit I could discover surrounding objects only through a thick vapour as far as the eye could reach. Neither tree nor shadow—not even a bush was to be seen: a few sapless, solitary shrubs were all that grew between the crevices of the rocks. I longed with indescribable emotion to behold the face of a human being, of whatever character, though his presence were

calculated to fill me with alarm. Hunger began to gnaw my vitals afresh. I threw myself upon the ground, resolving there to die. Soon, however, the love of life revived within me. I strove to resume my courage, and continued my way, amidst sighs and tears. Towards the close of the day I was so exhausted that I hardly knew what I did; I became indifferent about life, and yet was afraid to die. As evening gathered in the country assumed a less wild and gloomy character, happier thoughts and feelings revived, and the desire of life seemed to beat in all my veins. At length I fancied I heard the murmuring sounds of a distant mill, and redoubling my speed, I soon reached the end of the rugged cliffs. I caught a view of woods and meadows, and mountains beyond in the distance. I felt as if I were suddenly emerging from the regions of torment into paradise, and solitude and destitution appeared no longer awful.

"My delight was considerably diminished when I came towards a waterfall instead of the hoped-for mill. I caught the water eagerly in my hand; when suddenly I heard some one cough gently at a little distance from me. Never was I so agreeably surprised as at that very moment. I ran nearer to the spot, and at the corner of the wood I saw an aged woman, who appeared stooping as if to rest herself. She was almost quite in black, with a black hood over her head and the greater part of her face, and she held a small crutch in her hand. On approaching nearer and soliciting her assistance, she bade me seat myself at her side, at the same time offering me some bread and a cup of wine. When I was seated, she began, in a harsh disagreeable tone, to sing a hymn. After this she rose up and informed me that I might follow her.

"Singular as the voice and manner of the old crone appeared to me, I gladly accepted her offer. She contrived to hobble along at a pretty quick pace with the help of her staff, but distorted her countenance in so whimsical

a manner at every step that, for some time, I could not refrain from laughing. The sterile rocks appeared to vanish by degrees as we proceeded. We crossed over a fine green meadow, and next through an extensive grove. As we were approaching its opposite skirts the sun went down, and I never, I think, can cease to recollect the lovely aspect of the scene which that evening presented itself. Every object seemed dissolved, as it were, in the softest vermilion and gold; the tree-tops were brightly tinged by the rays of the setting sun; the richest glow of summer warmed the fields; the vast arch of heaven was bright as if paradise were unfolded to the view. Then the trickling of the fountains, the whispering of the leaves, produced a soft music that added a new charm to the serenity of the scene, more allied to pensive than animated emotions of joy. It was now that my inexperienced heart for the first tim seemed to indulge a foretaste of the world and its affairs. Heedless both of myself and my guide, all spirits and all eyes, I gazed until I wished to lose myself in the vastness of the golden heavens. But I was compelled to follow; and we now ascended a hill crowned with birch trees, and we beheld a green vale full of the same trees from its summit. Amid these trees lay a small cottage, and a shrill bark was heard, and a lively little dog came capering and fondling towards the old woman, and then towards me. As we were descending the hill I heard a singular song, which I thought sounded as if from the cottage, like the notes of some bird, yet as distinct as here follows:

The lonely wood
To me seems good,
So does the green-wood tree;
The song by night,
The pale moonlight,—
The lonely wood's the home for me.

"The same simple words were incessantly repeated, and to describe them aright I should say they came like the music of French horns and bugles mingling in the distance.

I was very curious to learn the cause, and ran into the cottage without waiting for the old woman's permission. It was already light. The inside appeared neatly arranged: a few glasses were lying upon a shelf, with other odd-shaped vessels upon a table; and behold, in a beautiful cage, was the bird I had heard, which sang those very words. The old woman coughed and panted, as if she were about to yield the ghost, yet she first stroked her little dog, and then talked to the bird, whose sole answer was the same pretty song; and she conducted herself just in the manner she would had I not been there. When I looked at her I felt a cold shuddering come over me; the muscles of her face were constantly working, and her head shook so strangely with old age that I could not conceive what she most looked like. When she was a little recovered she struck a light, spread a small table, and set out the evening meal. Then, looking at me intently, she ordered me to take one of the reed-bottomed chairs and sit opposite to her. The candle was placed between us, and she folded her lean shrivelled hands and prayed aloud; while the same distortions of face were continued, so very ridiculous that I could hardly prevent myself from laughing, fearful as I was of exciting her anger.

"Supper was no sooner over than she began to pray again; after which she pointed me to my low narrow dormitory, while she occupied the eating-room. Being already half asleep, I soon sunk into profound repose. Yet I woke frequently during the night, and heard the old woman coughing and speaking to the dog, as well as to her bird, which seemed to be dreaming, as it sang only, in broken accents, single words of the same song. Add to this the rustling sound of the birch trees before the window, the notes of the distant nightingale—altogether forming such an odd concert that I began to think I was not awake; but each time had fallen into a more and more singular dream.

"At length I was awakened by the old woman—it was morning; and she soon found some work for me. She began by teaching me to spin, the method of which I shortly acquired. I was also desired to look after the bird and the dog, and introduced into the management of housekeeping. Everything around soon became familiar to me, and it now was evident to me that everything ought to be as it was. I no longer imagined the old woman looked strange and whimsical, or that her dwelling was odd and lay remote from other human habitations; not even that there was anything unnatural in the bird. Indeed, I was struck with his plumage, which shone with a thousand dyes—the richest azure, and the most glowing red, with alternate streaks on his neck and body. And when he sang, he spread his feathers both bold and proudly to the eye, which then assumed their richest brilliancy.

"The old woman was in the habit of leaving her abode in the morning, and not returning until night. On these occasions I was accustomed to take the dog and go out to meet her, when she would call me her pretty child and daughter. Shortly I grew quite attached to her, the mind of a mere child easily accustoming itself to anything. In the evenings I was taught to read, in which I made good progress, and soon it became a source of constant pleasure to me, as the old dame had several books, written in an ancient style, containing wonderful adventures.

"The remembrance of my mode of life at that period always much affects me, even until now. Visited by no human being, and confined to so narrow a circle, even the bird and dog made an impression upon me which only long acquaintance, in other instances, can produce. Never since have I been able to call to mind the singular name of the little dog, though I have called him so repeatedly.

"Four years were thus spent, and I was about twelve years old, when the old body began to give me more of her confidence, and told me a great secret. Indeed, I daily

observed that she busied herself with something about the cage, but had never taken further notice of it. It now appeared that the bird every day laid an egg, always containing either a pearl or a diamond. In her absence I was permitted to take out the eggs and to deposit them carefully in the odd-shaped vessels before mentioned. She left me my food, and her absence daily continued to grow longer and longer: first weeks, then months, elapsed. My wheel went round, the dog barked, the wonderful bird sang his old song, and all was so lone and still that, during the whole period I do not remember a single tempest, or rain, or thunder. No one wandered near the spot—no, not a beast of the forest drew nigh. Day followed day. I pursued my toil and was contented.

"Perhaps if we could contrive to spend our whole lives in this manner we should be happier in the end.

"From the little I read my imagination was filled with the most extravagant notions of the world and of man. My views were borrowed only from myself and my companions. My idea of lively people consisted wholly in that of the little dog; richly arrayed ladies were compared to the beautiful bird, and every old body to my own ancient dame. I had read something, too, of love, and went over, in my fancy, the most wonderful scenes and adventures. I drew a picture of the handsomest knight in the world; I endowed him with perfection, and yet I was unable, after all my trouble, to understand the sort of personage I had made. I was melted with compassion at my own condition when, as was often the case, he refused to return my love. I began to pronounce long and affecting soliloquies not unfrequently aloud, as if to win him back; I see you smile, for we are truly all of us past this stage of youth.

"At length I began to feel pleased at being alone, for I was then mistress of the house. The dog was quite a favourite with me, and obeyed my call; the bird answered

all my questions with his pretty song; even my spinning-wheel hummed the same assiduous music, and I indulged no desire of change. The old woman, returning from her long excursion, commended my care and attention, observing that her household had been better conducted since I arrived, and she then praised my growth and my good looks. In short, she just showed me the same kindness as if I had been her daughter.

"'You are my good child,' she one day said to me, in her harsh squeaking tone; 'if you only go on thus everything will be well with you. But we must keep the straightforward path, or good fortune will soon leave us, and punishment be sure to follow, however slow.'

"I did not pay much heed to this good advice, being extremely volatile in all my motions; but it would often occur to me at night, though I was at a loss to conceive her meaning. I reflected, indeed, upon every word that dropped from her lips. I had heard of riches, and I began to suspect that her pearls and diamonds might be valuable. This notion soon appeared more clearly to me; but as to the straightforward path, there I was quite at a loss. Yet long reflection even rendered this intelligible to me in time.

"I was now fourteen years old, and felt what a misfortune it is that we do but attain our maturer knowledge, as it were, at the expense of the innocence of our souls. I became aware that it only rested with myself to take possession of the bird and all the precious stones in the old woman's absence, and then visit the world of which I had heard so much. Besides, I might there, perhaps, meet with my handsome knight, who still floated so brightly before my imagination.

"This thought came and went like any other idea, though it ever haunted me while I sat at my wheel. Soon I became so absorbed in its flattering prospects that I beheld myself magnificently attired, surrounded by a train

of knights and princely personages. When I had so far forgotten myself, I became grieved at finding myself still confined to the same narrow spot. Yet if I only did my duty, the old woman troubled herself very little with other points of behaviour.

"She one day went forth, saying that she should be away much longer than usual, and that I must keep my eye upon every article, and at the same time contrive to amuse myself. I was more anxious at this parting than before, for I fancied I should never behold her again. I kept her in view as long as I could, though I knew not why I felt so uneasy: it was just as if my future intention stood forward to accuse me, without my being exactly aware what it was.

"I had never before attended to the little dog and the bird with so much tenderness; they appeared dearer to me than I can describe. The good old dame had not been gone many days before the same thought returned; and I rose one morning with the fixed resolution of forsaking the cottage and running away with the little bird to seek my fortune in the world. My mind was greatly perplexed; I wished to persuade myself to stay, but the very idea had become hateful to me. There was a struggle in my soul. It was like the contention of two rival spirits. At one moment the quiet solitude of the scene appeared so delightful; and the next my anticipation of a new world, so full of agreeable varieties, seemed to beckon me away.

"I was puzzled how to act: the little dog leapt up and caressed me; the sun's beams lay warm upon the fields, and the bright green of the birch leaves glittered in the morning light. I felt the pleasing sensation of having found something new—something that was to be done, and done speedily. Involuntarily I seized the dog, bound him fast in the room, and, taking down the cage, proceeded forth. The little dog barked and whined at being thus treated; looked up in my face as if to entreat me to take

him with me; but I was too much afraid. I had courage, however, to seize upon a vessel filled with precious stones; and, putting it into my pocket, I left the remainder of them where they stood.

"In going through the door the bird turned round with a very odd expression, I thought, for a bird; the poor dog made many attempts to follow; but he was compelled to remain in his prison. I sought to shun the path towards the wild and sterile rocks by going directly the opposite way. I heard the dog's moans and howls incessantly, and the sound went to my heart. The bird often began his song, but the motion of his cage seemed to interfere with it. The barking at last began to die away in the distance, and soon entirely ceased; I wept, and was very near returning, had not my wish to behold something new impelled me to continue my route

"Already I had traversed the mountains and the neighbouring woods, when the approach of evening compelled me to enter a village. As I walked into an inn I was overpowered with a feeling of shame; they showed me into a room with a bed in it, and I passed a tranquil night, except that the idea of the old dame seemed to haunt me with terrific threats.

"My journey was rather uniform; only the farther I went the more sadly was I tormented with the thought of the old woman and her little dog. I was afraid he would be starved to death unless I assisted him; while at every turn of the road I fancied the old lady would suddenly start out before me. I continued my route, sighing and weeping as I went, and whenever I stopped and placed the cage upon the ground the bird began his wonderful song; and I recalled to mind, with lively regret, the sweet secluded spot I had deserted. So wayward is the human mind that I began to think my journey almost more wretched than the one I had made in my childhood, and I wished myself once more in my former situation.

"I disposed of some of my diamonds, and after proceeding for a few days I arrived at a little village. I felt myself strangely affected as I entered the place; I was dreadfully alarmed, though I knew not wherefore, and I strove to recover my presence of mind, when I found I had returned to my native village. How astonished I felt! Tears of delight ran down my cheeks, while a thousand tender recollections came across my mind. Many changes had taken place: new houses were built, others fallen into decay. I stood upon a spot where there had been a fire, and all around appeared more small and contracted than I should have imagined. I anticipated great pleasure in the idea of again beholding my parents, after so many years. Soon I discovered our little cottage—the same threshold, the latch of the door—all was just the same as I had left them. It seemed but yesterday that I was leaning against the door. My heart beat with emotion. I opened it in haste, and found myself amid a party of strangers, who fixed their eyes upon me in astonishment. I inquired for the shepherd Martin. They answered that he and his wife had died some three years ago; when, instantly withdrawing, I left the village, weeping aloud.

"Alas! I had pictured to myself the pleasure of surprising them with my wealth. By a very singular adventure I had obtained what I only dreamed of in my childhood; yet all was now in vain; they could not partake it with me; and the most flattering prospect of my whole existence suddenly vanished from my view.

"I took a small house and garden, near a pleasant country town, and also engaged an attendant. I was not half so much surprised with the world as I had fondly anticipated; yet, by degrees, I contrived to forget the old woman and my former mode of life—in fact, living very contentedly.

"The bird had long ceased to sing; and I felt not a little terrified when one night he suddenly began a different song; it ran as follows:

The lone wood side, the lone wood side,
Lies very far from me,
Where late I loved to hide,
And fain again would be.
The lone wood side for me

"I could not compose myself to sleep, my memory was too busy with the past; I feared I had done wrong.

"The sight of the bird when I rose in the morning seemed a reproach to me; he looked at me continually, and his presence grew irksome to me. He now never ceased his song, which was louder and more sweet than usual. The oftener I looked at him the more uneasy I became. At length I opened the cage, and, seizing him by the neck, pressed my fingers tightly together. He cast one imploring look. I loosed my hold, but he was already dead. I then went and buried him in the garden.

"Next my fears turned towards my attendant, when I reflected upon what I had myself done. I thought she might take it into her head to rob and perhaps to murder me. Some time previous to this I became acquainted with a young knight, with whom I was much pleased. I gave him my hand in marriage—and it is thus, Mr. Walther, that my story comes to an end."

"Yes, you should have seen her then," cried the fond Egbert eagerly; "you should have seen what youth, beauty, and inexpressible charms her secluded kind of education had given her. To me she appeared most like a miracle; and I loved her most devotedly. I had no property: it was her love that brought me prosperity. We withdrew to this spot, and hitherto we have had no reason to regret our union."

"But," said Bertha, "we have continued to prattle until it is become very late. Suppose we retire to rest."

Saying this, she rose and went to the door. Walther wished her a good-night, adding, as he kissed her hand, "I return you thanks, my noble lady. I think I can just

imagine you with your wonderful bird, and the way in which you fed the pretty *Strohmian.*"

Walther then also retired to his chamber, while Egbert walked up and down the hall with a dissatisfied air. At length he stopped, exclaiming, "To think of the folly of mankind! I first persuaded my wife to relate her history, and such confidence now vexes me. Will he divulge it to others? Will he not, perhaps—for such is the human character—be seized with a fatal wish for our diamonds, and contrive some plan for obtaining them?"

It then occurred to him that Walther had not taken leave of him as he might have done, after receiving such a proof of confidence. Once bent upon suspicion, the soul is apt to construe the least trifle into a matter of importance. Egbert reproached himself for so very undeserved a distrust of his excellent friend; yet in vain he attempted to banish it. Full of these thoughts, he ranged about the house, and got very little sleep. The next morning he heard Bertha was unwell; she could not appear at breakfast. Walther seemed to trouble himself in no way at this, and took leave of the knight with an air of indifference. His friend was unable to account for this change. He went to inquire after his wife, and found her in a high fever. She was of opinion that the long narration of the preceding evening might thus have agitated her nerves. From this period Walther seldom returned to the Castle, and then soon took his leave, after a slight unmeaning conversation. Egbert now began to be greatly alarmed; but he concealed his feelings both from his friend and his wife, though his anxiety must have been evident to them.

Bertha's indisposition grew daily more serious. Her physician expressed his fears; for the roses had left her cheeks, while her eyes became more and more inflamed. One morning she entreated to see Egbert at her bedside, at the same time ordering her domestics to withdraw. When her husband drew nigh, she observed, "My dear

husband, there is something which has very nearly deprived me of reason, and quite destroyed my health; and trifling as it may appear, I think it my duty to confide it to you. You may recollect that, in giving an account of my childhood, I never could call to mind the name of the little dog, which was so long with me. But on that evening when your friend took leave of me he said, 'I can imagine the way in which you used to feed the little *Strohmian*.' Could this be mere accident, or did he guess the real name? Does he perhaps know the dog, do you suppose, and could he name him to me purposely? How is this man connected with my destiny? Sometimes I strive to believe that I do but imagine this strange circumstance: yet you perceive that it is only too certain. A terrible emotion overpowered me when I found myself so strangely reminded of the name, and by a perfect stranger. What does my Egbert think of it?"

Egbert gazed upon the features of his suffering Bertha with tender compassion; but for some time spoke not. At length he uttered a few consolatory words and took his leave. In unutterable anguish he paced to and fro, in one of the most secluded chambers of the Castle. For several years Walther had been his sole companion—yet now he was the only being in the world whose existence distressed him. He felt as if he should never enjoy happiness more until he were swept from across his path. To dissipate his anxiety, he took down his fowling-piece and bent his steps towards the moors.

The air was chill, with a stormy sky; the snow lay deep upon the ground, and the naked branches of the trees were covered with it. The unhappy Egbert walked hard, until the perspiration stood upon his forehead; and meeting with no game, it added to his secret vexation. Soon, however, he perceived some object moving in the distance: it was his friend busied in collecting mosses. Scarcely conscious of what he did, Egbert levelled his piece. Walther looked

towards him with a silent, but threatening gesture. It was too late; the fatal shot was fired, and Walther lay lifeless on the ground.

At first Egbert felt easy, or at least more composed, though a feeling of alarm impelled his footsteps back towards his Castle. A long walk lay before him; for he had wandered far across the moors and into the woods.

He was informed on his return that Bertha had expired, raving, in a strange unintelligible manner, about Walther and the old woman.

For some time after this event Egbert buried himself in the deepest solitude. Always of a pensive cast of mind, his wife's singular story had often filled him with uneasiness, lest some untoward occurrence was in store for them; and now he was quite overwhelmed.

The assassination of his friend continually haunted him; his life became a prey to remorse and misery; and such were his sufferings that he was glad to seek the society of a neighbouring town and mix in the reigning amusements. Still he wished to have a friend in whom to confide; he felt a vacancy in his soul; and when he thought of Walther his terror was redoubled, for what friend could alleviate such misery? Then he had passed so many delightful days with his dear, unhappy Bertha; but friendship and love had both vanished from his view, and his life became more like a strange tale that had been told than a mere human career.

Soon he met with a young knight, named Hugo, who appeared to take an interest in the sad and thoughtful Egbert. He returned the knight's courtesies the more willingly as he had not expected them, and ere long they were seldom separate. They never rode out except in each other's company, they visited in the same societies; and yet Egbert was far from being happy. He felt as if he were imposing upon his friend Hugo, whose affection for him was founded in error. He wished to confide the secret

of his destiny, in order to learn whether his friendship would stand the test. He then felt so completely overwhelmed with a sense of his infamy that he believed no one could really esteem him, to whom he was not totally unknown. Nevertheless he could not resist the impulse, and, during a solitary ride, he confided the history of his adventures to his friend. He then inquired whether Hugo could retain his esteem for an assassin. Hugo was affected, and tried to console him, as Egbert followed him, with lighter heart and feelings, back to the town.

But, alas! it was the curse of Egbert's nature to indulge suspicion even in the hour of confidence, and hardly had they entered the public rooms together before the features of his friend Hugo began to alarm him. He fancied he detected a malicious smile playing upon his lips; that he spoke very short, conversing with other people present with a kind of marked neglect towards him.

Among the company was an old knight, who had ever shown a decided enmity towards Egbert, often inquiring in a very peculiar manner respecting his wealth and his wife. Hugo was observed to associate much with this man, frequently conversing with him aside, while they directed their looks towards Egbert. Believing himself betrayed, his soul became a prey to the most violent rage. While still gazing on them, what was his horror suddenly to behold Walther's face, his exact features, his well-known figure! He withdrew his eyes. Again he looked—it was no one else but Walther whispering in the ear of the old man. His terror was extreme. He darted from the room with a look of distraction, and, abandoning the place that evening, immured himself once more in his Castle.

There, with the restlessness of a troubled spirit, he paced from room to room, his thoughts incessantly busied with horrible ideas, while slumber no longer visited his eyes. Sometimes he believed himself insane, that it was only imagination which had produced so many terrific circum-

stances; yet, surely, he recollected Walther's features; here there could be no illusion, and again everything became inexplicable. Soon he resolved to try whether travel would tend to dissipate these hateful feelings; for friendship and society seemed to be closed against him for ever. Without having fixed upon any settled route, he instantly set forth, paying little attention to the country and the objects before him. When he had proceeded during some days, he began to enter some defile, among the rocks, whence he found no outlet. At last he met with an old peasant, who led him to a path opposite a waterfall. He wished to bestow some pieces upon his guide, but he refused them.

"I could almost imagine," said Egbert to himself, "nay, I could lay a wager, that this man is Walther." Again he turned round to look; it was indeed Walther! Egbert stuck his spurs into his horse and sped through wood and field, until, worn down by fatigue, the noble beast fell upon the ground. He then continued his route on foot, and, half distracted, he ascended a hill; he thought he caught the sound of a dog barking near him, but the waving of the birch trees might perhaps deceive him, which interposed between the spot. Soon, however, he distinctly heard, in a kind of supernatural note, the following song:

The lonely wood
To me seems good,
So does the green-wood tree;
The song by night,—
The pale moonlight,
The lonely wood for me.

At these sounds Egbert lost all sense of reason and consciousness. Buried in the labyrinth of fear and mystery, he was uncertain whether he were awake or whether he ever possessed such a wife as Bertha. He grew more and more confused; a variety of strange fancies whirled through his brain; he breathed in an enchanted world; he could not rightly conceive or recollect anything.

Next he saw an aged woman, bent almost double, come creeping and coughing, with a crutch in her hand, along the hillside.

"Dost thou bring back my dog, my bird, my jewels?" she shrieked aloud. "Now see how the unjust punish themselves. I was thy friend Walther; I was thy Hugo—only I."

"Gracious God," cried Egbert, "in what an awful wilderness, then, have I spent my days!"

"And Bertha was thy own sister!" added the old crone.

The unhappy Egbert lay senseless on the earth.

"Why," continued the old woman, "why did she so deceitfully abandon me? Had she not done this, everything would have yet been well. Her period of trial was already over. She was the daughter of a Knight, who confided her to the care of a herdsman—thy own father's daughter."

"Alas! alas!" exclaimed Egbert. "Why have I ever predicted this fatal consequence—ever been haunted by this detested idea?"

"Because," said the old woman, "thy father himself informed thee that he had a daughter, whom he did not venture to bring up at home on account of his wife, being his daughter by another woman."

Egbert heard no more: he was lying in a raving and dying state upon the earth. The last voices that broke upon his ear were the screaming voice of the old woman, the barking of the dog, and the strange bird's reiterated song.

LUDWIG TIECK

(1773–1853)

***

II

THE ELVES

(Translated by THOMAS CARLYLE)

"WHERE is our little Mary?" said the father.

"She is playing out upon the green there with our neighbour's boy," replied the mother.

"I wish they may not run away and lose themselves," said he; "they are so thoughtless."

The mother looked for the little ones, and brought them their evening luncheon. "It is warm," said the boy; "and Mary had a longing for the red cherries."

"Have a care, children," said the mother, "and do not run too far from home, and not into the wood; Father and I are going to the fields."

Little Andres answered: "Never fear, the wood frightens us; we shall sit here by the house, where there are people near us."

The mother went in, and soon came out again with her husband. They locked the door, and turned towards the fields to look after their labourers, and see their hay-harvest in the meadow. Their house lay upon a little green height, encircled by a pretty ring of paling, which likewise enclosed their fruit and flower garden. The hamlet stretched somewhat deeper down, and on the other side lay the castle of the Count. Martin rented the large farm from this noble-

man; and was living in contentment with his wife and only child; for he yearly saved some money, and had the prospect of becoming a man of substance by his industry, for the ground was productive, and the Count not illiberal.

As he walked with his wife to the fields, he gazed cheerfully round and said: "What a different look this quarter has, Brigitta, from the place we lived in formerly! Here it is all so green; the whole village is bedecked with thick-spreading fruit-trees; the ground is full of beautiful herbs and flowers; all the houses are cheerful and cleanly, the inhabitants are at their ease: nay, I could almost fancy that the woods are greener here than elsewhere, and the sky bluer; and, so far as the eye can reach, you have pleasure and delight in beholding the bountiful Earth."

"And whenever you cross the stream," said Brigitta, "you are, as it were, in another world, all is so dreary and withered; but every traveller declares that our village is the fairest in the country far and near."

"All but that fir-ground," said her husband; "do but look back to it, how dark and dismal that solitary spot is lying in the gay scene: the dingy fir-trees with the smoky huts behind them, the ruined stalls, the brook flowing past with a sluggish melancholy."

"It is true," replied Brigitta; "if you but approach that spot, you grow disconsolate and sad, you know not why. What sort of people can they be that live there, and keep themselves so separate from the rest of us, as if they had an evil conscience?"

"A miserable crew," replied the young Farmer: "gipsies, seemingly, that steal and cheat in other quarters, and have their hoard and hiding-place here. I wonder only that his Lordship suffers them."

"Who knows," said the wife, with an accent of pity, "but perhaps they may be poor people, wishing, out of shame, to conceal their poverty; for, after all, no one can say aught ill of them; the only thing is, that they do not

go to church, and none knows how they live; for the little garden, which indeed seems altogether waste, cannot possibly support them; and fields they have none."

"God knows," said Martin, as they went along, "what trade they follow; no mortal comes to them; for the place they live in is as if bewitched and excommunicated, so that even our wildest fellows will not venture into it."

Such conversation they pursued, while walking to the fields. That gloomy spot they spoke of lay aside from the hamlet. In a dell, begirt with firs, you might behold a hut, and various ruined office-houses; rarely was smoke seen to mount from it, still more rarely did men appear there; though at times curious people, venturing somewhat nearer, had perceived upon the bench before the hut, some hideous women, in ragged clothes, dandling in their arms some children equally dirty and ill-favoured; black dogs were running up and down upon the boundary; and, of an evening, a man of monstrous size was seen to cross the footbridge of the brook, and disappear in the hut; and, in the darkness, various shapes were observed, moving like shadows round a fire in the open air. This piece of ground, the firs and the ruined huts, formed in truth a strange contrast with the bright green landscape, the white houses of the hamlet, and the stately new-built castle.

The two little ones had now eaten their fruit; it came into their heads to run races; and the little nimble Mary always got the start of the less active Andres. "It is not fair," cried Andres at last: "let us try it for some length, then we shall see who wins."

"As thou wilt," said Mary; "only to the brook we must not run."

"No," said Andres; "but there, on the hill, stands the large pear-tree, a quarter of a mile from this. I shall run by the left, round past the fir-ground; thou canst try it by the right over the fields; so we do not meet till we get up, and then we shall see which of us is swifter."

"Done," cried Mary, and began to run; "for we shall not mar one another by the way, and my father says it is as far to the hill by that side of the Gipsies' house as by this."

Andres had already started, and Mary, turning to the right, could no longer see him. "It is very silly," said she to herself: "I have only to take heart, and run along the bridge, past the hut, and through the yard, and I shall certainly be first." She was already standing by the brook and the clump of firs. "Shall I? No; it is too frightful," said she. A little white dog was standing on the farther side, and barking with might and main. In her terror, Mary thought the dog some monster, and sprang back. "Fy! fy!" said she: "the dolt is gone half way by this time, while I stand here considering." The little dog kept barking, and, as she looked at it more narrowly, it seemed no longer frightful, but, on the contrary, quite pretty; it had a red collar round its neck, with a glittering bell; and as it raised its head, and shook itself in barking, the little bell sounded with the finest tinkle. "Well, I must risk it!" cried she, "I will run for life; quick, quick, I am through; certainly to Heaven, they cannot eat me up alive in half a minute!" And with this, the gay, courageous little Mary sprang along the footbridge; passed the dog, which ceased its barking and began to fawn on her; and in a moment she was standing on the other bank, and the black firs all round concealed from view her father's house, and the rest of the landscape.

But what was her astonishment when here! The loveliest, most variegated flower-garden, lay round her; tulips, roses and lilies were glittering in the fairest colours; blue and gold-red butterflies were wavering in the blossoms; cages of shining wire were hung on the espaliers, with many-coloured birds in them, singing beautiful songs; and children, in short white frocks, with flowing yellow hair and brilliant eyes, were frolicking about; some playing

with lambkins, some feeding the birds, or gathering flowers, and giving them to one another; some, again, were eating cherries, grapes and ruddy apricots. No hut was to be seen; but instead of it, a large fair house, with a brazen door and lofty statues, stood glancing in the middle of the space. Mary was confounded with surprise, and knew not what to think; but, not being bashful, she went right up to the first of the children, held out her hand, and wished the little creature good-even.

"Art thou come to visit us, then?" said the glittering child; "I saw thee running, playing on the other side, but thou wert frightened at our little dog."

"So you are not gipsies and rogues," said Mary, "as Andres always told me? He is a stupid thing, and talks of much he does not understand."

"Stay with us," said the strange little girl; "thou wilt like it well."

"But we are running a race."

"Thou wilt find thy comrade soon enough. There, take and eat."

Mary ate, and found the fruit more sweet than any she had ever tasted in her life before; and Andres, and the race, and the prohibition of her parents, were entirely forgotten.

A stately woman, in a shining robe, came towards them, and asked about the stranger child. "Fairest lady," said Mary, "I came running hither by chance, and now they wish to keep me."

"Thou art aware, Zerina," said the lady, "that she can be here but for a little while; besides, thou shouldst have asked my leave."

"I thought," said Zerina, "when I saw her admitted across the bridge, that I might do it; we have often seen her running in the fields, and thou thyself hast taken pleasure in her lively temper. She will have to leave us soon enough."

"No, I will stay here," said the little stranger; "for here it is so beautiful, and here I shall find the prettiest play-

things, and store of berries and cherries to boot. On the other side it is not half so grand."

The gold-robed lady went away with a smile; and many of the children now came bounding round the happy Mary, in their mirth, and twitched her, and incited her to dance; others brought her lambs, or curious playthings; others made music on instruments, and sang to it.

She kept, however, by the playmate who had first met her; for Zerina was the kindest and loveliest of them all. Little Mary cried and cried again: "I will stay with you forever; I will stay with you, and you shall be my sisters"; at which the children all laughed, and embraced her. "Now we shall have a royal sport," said Zerina. She ran into the Palace, and returned with a little golden box, in which lay a quantity of seeds, like glittering dust. She lifted of it with her little hand, and scattered some grains on the green earth. Instantly the grass began to move, as in waves; and, after a few moments, bright rose-bushes started from the ground, shot rapidly up, and budded all at once, while the sweetest perfume filled the place. Mary also took a little of the dust, and, having scattered it, she saw white lilies, and the most variegated pinks, pushing up. At a signal from Zerina, the flowers disappeared, and others rose in their room. "Now," said Zerina, "look for something greater." She laid two pine-seeds in the ground, and stamped them in sharply with her foot. Two green bushes stood before them. "Grasp me fast," said she; and Mary threw her arms about the slender form. She felt herself borne upwards; for the trees were springing under them with the greatest speed; the tall pines waved to and fro, and the two children held each other fast embraced, swinging this way and that in the red clouds of the twilight, and kissed each other; while the rest were climbing up and down the trunks with quick dexterity, pushing and teasing one another with loud laughter when they met; if any one fell down in the press,

it flew through the air, and sank slowly and surely to the ground. At length Mary was beginning to be frightened; and the other little child sang a few loud tones, and the trees again sank down, and set them on the ground as gradually as they had lifted them before to the clouds.

They next went through the brazen door of the palace. Here many fair women, elderly and young, were sitting in the round hall, partaking of the fairest fruits, and listening to glorious invisible music. In the vaulting of the ceiling, palms, flowers and groves stood painted, among which little figures of children were sporting and winding in every graceful posture; and with the tones of the music, the images altered and glowed with the most burning colours; now the blue and green were sparkling like radiant light, now these tints faded back in paleness, the purple flamed up, and the gold took fire; and then the naked children seemed to be alive among the flower-garlands, and to draw breath, and emit it through their ruby-coloured lips; so that by fits you could see the glance of their little white teeth, and the lighting up of their azure eyes.

From the hall, a stair of brass led down to a subterranean chamber. Here lay much gold and silver, and precious stones of every hue shone out between them. Strange vessels stood along the walls, and all seemed filled with costly things. The gold was worked into many forms, and glittered with the friendliest red. Many little dwarfs were busied sorting the pieces from the heap, and putting them in the vessels; others, hunch-backed and bandy-legged, with long red noses, were tottering slowly along, half-bent to the ground, under full sacks, which they bore as millers do their grain; and, with much panting, shaking out the gold-dust on the ground. Then they darted awkwardly to the right and left, and caught the rolling balls that were like to run away; and it happened now and then that one in his eagerness overset the other, so that both fell heavily and clumsily to the ground. They

made angry faces, and looked askance, as Mary laughed at their gestures and their ugliness. Behind them sat an old crumpled little man, whom Zerina reverently greeted; he thanked her with a grave inclination of his head. He held a sceptre in his hand, and wore a crown upon his brow, and all the other dwarfs appeared to regard him as their master, and obey his nod.

"What more wanted?" asked he, with a surly voice, as the children came a little nearer. Mary was afraid, and did not speak; but her companion answered, they were only come to look about them in the chambers. "Still your old child's tricks!" replied the dwarf: "Will there never be an end to idleness?" With this, he turned again to his employment, kept his people weighing and sorting the ingots; some he sent away on errands, some he chid with angry tones.

"Who is the gentleman?" said Mary.

"Our Metal-Prince," replied Zerina, as they walked along.

They seemed once more to reach the open air, for they were standing by a lake, yet no sun appeared, and they saw no sky above their heads. A little boat received them, and Zerina steered it diligently forwards. It shot rapidly along. On gaining the middle of the lake, the stranger saw that multitudes of pipes, channels, and brooks, were spreading from the little sea in every direction. "These waters to the right," said Zerina, "flow beneath your garden, and this is why it blooms so freshly; by the other side we get down into the great stream." On a sudden, out of all the channels, and from every quarter of the lake, came a crowd of little children swimming up; some wore garlands of sedge and water-lily; some had red stems of coral, others were blowing on crooked shells; a tumultuous noise echoed merrily from the dark shores; among the children might be seen the fairest women sporting in the waters, and often several of the children sprang about some one of them, and with kisses hung upon her neck

and shoulders. All saluted the strangers; and these steered onwards through the revelry out of the lake, into a little river, which grew narrower and narrower. At last the boat came aground. The strangers took their leave, and Zerina knocked against the cliff. This opened like a door, and a female form, all red, assisted them to mount. "Are you all brisk here?" inquired Zerina. "They are just at work," replied the other, "and happy as they could wish; indeed, the heat is very pleasant."

They went up a winding stair, and on a sudden Mary found herself in a most resplendent hall, so that as she entered, her eyes were dazzled by the radiance. Flame-coloured tapestry covered the walls with a purple glow; and when her eye had grown a little used to it, the stranger saw, to her astonishment, that, in the tapestry, there were figures moving up and down in dancing joyfulness; in form so beautiful, and of so fair proportions, that nothing could be seen more graceful; their bodies were as of red crystal, so that it appeared as if the blood were visible within them, flowing and playing in its courses. They smiled on the stranger, and saluted her with various bows; but as Mary was about approaching nearer them, Zerina plucked her sharply back, crying: "Thou wilt burn thyself, my little Mary, for the whole of it is fire."

Mary felt the heat. "Why do the pretty creatures not come out," said she, "and play with us?"

"As thou livest in the Air," replied the other, "so are they obliged to stay continually in Fire, and would faint and languish if they left it. Look now, how glad they are, how they laugh and shout; those down below spread out the fire-floods everywhere beneath the earth, and thereby the flowers, and fruits, and wine, are made to flourish; these red streams again, are to run beside the brooks of water; and thus the fiery creatures are kept ever busy and glad. But for thee it is too hot here; let us return to the garden."

In the garden, the scene had changed since they left it. The moonshine was lying on every flower; the birds were silent, and the children were asleep in complicated groups, among the green groves. Mary and her friend, however, did not feel fatigue, but walked about in the warm summer night, in abundant talk, till morning.

When the day dawned, they refreshed themselves on fruit and milk, and Mary said: "Suppose we go, by way of change, to the firs, and see how things look there?"

"With all my heart," replied Zerina; "thou wilt see our watchmen too, and they will surely please thee; they are standing up among the trees on the mound." The two proceeded through the flower-garden by pleasant groves, full of nightingales; then they ascended a vine-hill; and at last, after long following the windings of a clear brook, arrived at the firs, and the height which bounded the domain. "How does it come," said Mary, "that we have to walk so far here, when without, the circuit is so narrow?"

"I know not," said her friend; "but so it is."

They mounted to the dark firs, and a chill wind blew from without in their faces; a haze seemed lying far and wide over the landscape. On the top were many strange forms standing: with mealy, dusty faces; their misshapen heads not unlike those of white owls; they were clad in folded cloaks of shaggy wool; they held umbrellas of curious skins stretched out above them; and they waved and fanned themselves incessantly with large bat's wings, which flared out curiously beside the woollen roquelaures. "I could laugh, yet I am frightened," cried Mary.

"These are our good trusty watchmen," said her playmate; "they stand here and wave their fans, that cold anxiety and inexplicable fear may fall on every one that attempts to approach us. They are covered so, because without it is now cold and rainy, which they cannot bear. But snow, or wind, or cold air, never reaches down to us;

here is an everlasting spring and summer: yet if these poor people on the top were not frequently relieved, they would certainly perish."

"But who are you, then?" said Mary, while again descending to the flowery fragrance; "or have you no name at all?"

"We are called the Elves," replied the friendly child; "people talk about us in the Earth, as I have heard."

They now perceived a mighty bustle on the green. "The fair Bird is come!" cried the children to them: all hastened to the hall. Here, as they approached, young and old were crowding over the threshold, all shouting for joy; and from within resounded a triumphant peal of music. Having entered, they perceived the vast circuit filled with the most varied forms, and all were looking upwards to a large Bird with glancing plumage, that was sweeping slowly round in the dome, and in its stately flight describing many a circle. The music sounded more gaily than before; the colours and lights alternated more rapidly. At last the music ceased; and the Bird, with a rustling noise, floated down upon a glittering crown that hung hovering in air under the high window, by which the hall was lighted from above. His plumage was purple and green, and shining golden streaks played through it; on his head there waved a diadem of feathers, so resplendent that they glanced like jewels. His bill was red, and his legs of a glancing blue. As he moved, the tints gleamed through each other, and the eye was charmed with their radiance. His size was as that of an eagle. But now he opened his glittering beak; and sweetest melodies came pouring from his moved breast, in finer tones than the lovesick nightingale gives forth; still stronger rose the song, and streamed like floods of Light, so that all, the very children themselves, were moved by it to tears of joy and rapture. When he ceased, all bowed before him; he again flew round the dome in circles, then darted through the door, and soared into the

light heaven, where he shone far up like a red point, and then soon vanished from their eyes.

"Why are ye all so glad?" inquired Mary, bending to her fair playmate, who seemed smaller than yesterday.

"The King is coming!" said the little one; "many of us have never seen him, and whithersoever he turns his face, there is happiness and mirth; we have long looked for him, more anxiously than you look for spring when winter lingers with you; and now he has announced, by his fair herald, that he is at hand. This wise and glorious Bird, that has been sent to us by the King, is called Phœnix; he dwells far off in Arabia, on a tree, which there is no other that resembles it on Earth, as in like manner there is no second Phœnix. When he feels himself grown old, he builds a pile of balm and incense, kindles it, and dies singing; and then from the fragrant ashes, soars up the renewed Phœnix with unlessened beauty. It is seldom he so wings his course that men behold him; and when once in centuries this does occur, they note it in their annals, and expect remarkable events. But now, my friend, thou and I must part; for the sight of the King is not permitted thee."

Then the lady with the golden robe came through the throng, and beckoning Mary to her, led her into a sequestered walk. "Thou must leave us, my dear child," said she; "the King is to hold his court here for twenty years, perhaps longer; and fruitfulness and blessings will spread far over the land, but chiefly here beside us; all the brooks and rivulets will become more bountiful, all the fields and gardens richer, the wine more generous, the meadows more fertile, and the woods more fresh and green; a milder air will blow, no hail shall hurt, no flood shall threaten. Take this ring, and think of us: but beware of telling any one of our existence; or we must fly this land, and thou and all around will lose the happiness and blessing of our neighbourhood. Once more, kiss thy playmate, and farewell." They issued from the walk; Zerina wept, Mary stooped to

embrace her, and they parted. Already she was on the narrow bridge; the cold air was blowing on her back from the firs; the little dog barked with all its might, and rang its little bell; she looked round, then hastened over, for the darkness of the firs, the bleakness of the ruined huts, the shadows of the twilight, were filling her with terror.

"What a night my parents must have had on my account!" said she within herself, as she stept on the green; "and I dare not tell them where I have been, or what wonders I have witnessed, nor indeed would they believe me." Two men passing by saluted her; and as they went along, she heard them say: "What a pretty girl! Where can she come from?" With quickened steps she approached the house: but the trees which were hanging last night loaded with fruit were now standing dry and leafless; the house was differently painted, and a new barn had been built beside it. Mary was amazed, and thought she must be dreaming. In this perplexity she opened the door; and behind the table sat her father, between an unknown woman and a stranger youth. "Good God! Father," cried she, "where is my mother?"

"Thy mother!" said the woman, with a forecasting tone, and sprang towards her: "Ha, thou surely canst not—Yes, indeed, indeed thou art my lost, long-lost dear, only Mary!" She had recognised her by a little brown mole beneath the chin, as well as by her eyes and shape. All embraced her, all were moved with joy, and the parents wept. Mary was astonished that she almost reached to her father's stature; and she could not understand how her mother had become so changed and faded; she asked the name of the stranger youth. "It is our neighbour's Andres," said Martin. "How comest thou to us again, so unexpectedly, after seven long years? Where hast thou been? Why didst thou never send us tidings of thee?"

"Seven years!" said Mary, and could not order her ideas and recollections. "Seven whole years?"

"Yes, yes," said Andres, laughing, and shaking her trustfully by the hand; "I have won the race, good Mary; I was at the pear-tree and back again seven years ago, and thou, sluggish creature, art but just returned!"

They again asked, they pressed her; but remembering her instruction, she could answer nothing. It was they themselves chiefly that, by degrees, shaped a story for her: How, having lost her way, she had been taken up by a coach, and carried to a strange remote part, where she could not give the people any notion of her parents' residence; how she was conducted to a distant town, where certain worthy persons brought her up and loved her; how they had lately died, and at length she had recollected her birthplace, and so returned. "No matter how it is!" exclaimed her mother; "enough, that we have thee again, my little daughter, my own, my all!"

Andres waited supper, and Mary could not be at home in anything she saw. The house seemed small and dark; she felt astonished at her dress, which was clean and simple, but appeared quite foreign; she looked at the ring on her finger, and the gold of it glittered strangely, enclosing a stone of burning red. To her father's question, she replied that the ring also was a present from her benefactors.

She was glad when the hour of sleep arrived, and she hastened to her bed. Next morning she felt much more collected; she had now arranged her thoughts a little, and could better stand the questions of the people in the village, all of whom came in to bid her welcome. Andres was there too with the earliest, active, glad, and serviceable beyond all others. The blooming maiden of fifteen had made a deep impression on him; he had passed a sleepless night. The people of the castle likewise sent for Mary, and she had once more to tell her story to them, which was now grown quite familiar to her. The old Count and his Lady were surprised at her good-breeding; she was modest, but not embarrassed; she made answer

courteously in good phrases to all their questions; all fear of noble persons and their equipage had passed away from her; for when she measured these halls and forms by the wonders and the high beauty she had seen with the Elves in their hidden abode, this earthly splendour seemed but dim to her, the presence of men was almost mean. The young lords were charmed with her beauty.

It was now February. The trees were budding earlier than usual; the nightingale had never come so soon; the spring rose fairer in the land than the oldest men could recollect it. In every quarter, little brooks gushed out to irrigate the pastures and meadows; the hills seemed heaving, the vines rose higher and higher, the fruit-trees blossomed as they had never done; and a swelling fragrant blessedness hung suspended heavily in rosy clouds over the scene. All prospered beyond expectation; no rude day, no tempest injured the fruits; the wine flowed blushing in immense grapes; and the inhabitants of the place felt astonished, and were captivated as in a sweet dream. The next year was like its forerunner; but men had now become accustomed to the marvellous. In autumn Mary yielded to the pressing entreaties of Andres and her parents; she was betrothed to him, and in winter they were married.

She often thought with inward longing of her residence behind the fir-trees; she continued serious and still. Beautiful as all that lay around her was, she knew of something yet more beautiful; and from the remembrance of this, a faint regret attuned her nature to soft melancholy. It smote her painfully when her father and mother talked about the gipsies and vagabonds, that dwelt in the dark spot of ground. Often she was on the point of speaking out in defence of those good beings, whom she knew to be the benefactors of the land; especially to Andres, who appeared to take delight in zealously abusing them: yet still she repressed the word that was struggling to escape her bosom. So passed this year; in the next, she was

solaced by a little daughter, whom she named Elfrida, thinking of the designation of her friendly Elves.

The young people lived with Martin and Brigitta, the house being large enough for all; and helped their parents in conducting their now extended husbandry. The little Elfrida soon displayed peculiar faculties and gifts; for she could walk at a very early age, and could speak perfectly before she was a twelvemonth old; and after some few years, she had become so wise and clever, and of such wondrous beauty, that all people regarded her with astonishment; and her mother could not keep away the thought that her child resembled one of those shining little ones in the space behind the Firs. Elfrida cared not to be with other children; but seemed to avoid, with a sort of horror, their tumultuous amusements; and liked best to be alone. She would then retire into a corner of the garden, and read, or work diligently with her needle; often also you might see her sitting, as if deep sunk in thought; or violently walking up and down the alleys, speaking to herself. Her parents readily allowed her to have her will in these things, for she was healthy, and waxed apace; only her strange sagacious answers and observations often made them anxious. "Such wise children do not grow to age," her grandmother, Brigitta, many times observed; "they are too good for this world; the child, besides, is beautiful beyond nature, and will never find its proper place on Earth."

The little girl had this peculiarity, that she was very loath to let herself be served by any one, but endeavoured to do everything herself. She was almost the earliest riser in the house; she washed herself carefully, and dressed without assistance: at night she was equally careful; she took special heed to pack up her clothes and washed them with her own hands, allowing no one, not even her mother, to meddle with her articles. The mother humoured her in this caprice, not thinking it of any consequence. But what

was her astonishment, when, happening one holiday to insist, regardless of Elfrida's tears and screams, on dressing her out for a visit to the castle, she found upon her breast, suspended by a string, a piece of gold of a strange form, which she directly recognised as one of that sort she had seen in such abundance in the subterranean vault! The little thing was greatly frightened; and at last confessed that she had found it in the garden, and as she liked it much, had kept it carefully: she at the same time prayed so earnestly and pressingly to have it back, that Mary fastened it again on its former place, and, full of thoughts, went out with her in silence to the castle.

Sidewards from the farmhouse lay some offices for the storing of produce and implements; and behind these there was a little green, with an old grove, now visited by no one, as, from the new arrangement of the buildings, it lay too far from the garden. In this solitude Elfrida delighted most; and it occurred to nobody to interrupt her here, so that frequently her parents did not see her for half a day. One afternoon her mother chanced to be in these buildings, seeking for some lost article among the lumber; and she noticed that a beam of light was coming in, through a chink in the wall. She took a thought of looking through this aperture, and seeing what her child was busied with; and it happened that a stone was lying loose, and could be pushed aside, so that she obtained a view right into the grove. Elfrida was sitting there on a little bench, and beside her the well-known Zerina; and the children were playing, and amusing one another, in the kindliest unity. The Elf embraced her beautiful companion, and said mournfully: "Ah! dear little creature, as I sport with thee, so have I sported with thy mother, when she was a child; but you mortals so soon grow tall and thoughtful! It is very hard: wert thou but to be a child as long as I!"

"Willingly would I do it," said Elfrida; "but they all say, I shall come to sense, and give over playing altogether;

for I have great gifts, as they think, for growing wise. Ah! and then I shall see thee no more, thou dear Zerina! Yet it is with us as with the fruit-tree flowers: how glorious the blossoming apple-tree, with its red bursting buds! It looks so stately and broad; and every one, that passes under it, thinks surely something great will come of it; then the sun grows hot, and the buds come joyfully forth; but the wicked kernel is already there, which pushes off and casts away the fair flower's dress; and now, in pain and waxing, it can do nothing more, but must grow to fruit in harvest. An apple, to be sure, is pretty and refreshing; yet nothing to the blossom of spring. So is it also with us mortals: I am not glad in the least at growing to be a tall girl. Ah! could I but once visit you!"

"Since the King is with us," said Zerina, "it is quite impossible; but I will come to thee, my darling, often, often; and none shall see me either here or there. I will pass invisible through the air, or fly over to thee like a bird. O! we will be much, much together, while thou art still little. What can I do to please thee?"

"Thou must like me very dearly," said Elfrida, "as I like thee in my heart. But come, let us make another rose."

Zerina took the well-known box from her bosom, threw two grains from it on the ground; and instantly a green bush stood before them, with two deep-red roses, bending their heads, as if to kiss each other. The children plucked them smiling, and the bush disappeared. "O that it would not die so soon!" said Elfrida; "this red child, this wonder of the Earth!"

"Give it me here," said the little Elf; then breathed thrice upon the budding rose, and kissed it thrice. "Now," said she, giving back the rose, "it will continue fresh and blooming till winter."

"I will keep it," said Elfrida, "as an image of thee; I will guard it in my little room, and kiss it night and morning, as if it were thyself."

"The sun is setting," said the other; "I must home." They embraced again, and Zerina vanished.

In the evening, Mary clasped her child to her breast, with a feeling of alarm and veneration. She henceforth allowed the good little girl more liberty than formerly; and often calmed her husband when he came to search for the child; which for some time he was wont to do, as her retiredness did not please him; and he feared that, in the end, it might make her silly, or even pervert her understanding. The mother often glided to the chink; and almost always found the bright Elf beside her child, employed in sport, or in earnest conversation.

"Wouldst thou like to fly?" inquired Zerina once.

"O well! How well!" replied Elfrida; and the fairy clasped her mortal playmate in her arms, and mounted with her from the ground, till they hovered above the grove. The mother, in alarm, forgot herself, and pushed out her head in terror to look after them; when Zerina, from the air, held up her finger, and threatened yet smiled; then descended with the child, embraced her, and disappeared. After this, it happened more than once that Mary was observed by her; and every time, the shining little creature shook her head, or threatened, yet with friendly looks.

Often, in disputing with her husband, Mary had said in her zeal: "Thou dost injustice to the poor people in the hut!" But when Andres pressed her to explain why she differed in opinion from the whole village, nay, from his Lordship himself; and how she could understand it better than the whole of them, she still broke off embarrassed, and became silent. One day, after dinner, Andres grew more violent than ever; and maintained that, by one means or another, the crew must be packed away, as a nuisance to the country; when his wife, in anger, said to him: "Hush! for they are benefactors to thee and to every one of us."

"Benefactors!" cried the other, in astonishment: "These rogues and vagabonds?"

In her indignation, she was now at last tempted to relate to him, under promise of the strictest secrecy, the history of her youth: and as Andres at every word grew more incredulous, and shook his head in mockery, she took him by the hand, and led him to the chink; where, to his amazement, he beheld the glittering Elf sporting with his child, and caressing her in the grove. He knew not what to say; an exclamation of astonishment escaped him, and Zerina raised her eyes. On the instant she grew pale, and trembled violently; not with friendly, but with indignant looks, she made the sign of threatening, and then said to Elfrida: "Thou canst not help it, dearest heart; but they will never learn sense, wise as they believe themselves." She embraced the little one with stormy haste; and then, in the shape of a raven, flew with hoarse cries over the garden, towards the Firs.

In the evening, the little one was very still; she kissed her rose with tears; Mary felt depressed and frightened. Andres scarcely spoke. It grew dark. Suddenly there went a rustling through the trees; birds flew to and fro with wild screaming, thunder was heard to roll, the Earth shook, and tones of lamentation moaned in the air. Andres and his wife had not courage to rise; they shrouded themselves within the curtains, and with fear and trembling awaited the day. Towards morning, it grew calmer; and all was silent when the Sun, with his cheerful light, rose over the wood.

Andres dressed himself; and Mary now observed that the stone of the ring upon her finger had become quite pale. On opening the door, the sun shone clear on their faces, but the scene around them they could scarcely recognise. The freshness of the wood was gone; the hills were shrunk, the brooks were flowing languidly with scanty streams, the sky seemed grey; and when you turned to the Firs, they were

standing there no darker or more dreary than the other trees. The huts behind them were no longer frightful; and several inhabitants of the village came and told about the fearful night, and how they had been across the spot where the gipsies had lived; how these people must have left the place at last, for their huts were standing empty, and within had quite a common look, just like the dwellings of other poor people: some of their household gear was left behind.

Elfrida in secret said to her mother: "I could not sleep last night; and in my fright at the noise, I was praying from the bottom of my heart, when the door suddenly opened, and my playmate entered to take leave of me. She had a travelling pouch slung round her, a hat on her head, and a large staff in her hand. She was very angry at thee; since on thy account she had now to suffer the severest and most painful punishments, as she had always been so fond of thee; for all of them, she said, were very loath to leave this quarter."

Mary forbade her to speak of this, and now the ferryman came across the river, and told them new wonders. As it was growing dark, a stranger man of large size had come to him, and hired his boat till sunrise; and with this condition, that the boatman should remain quiet in his house, at least should not cross the threshold of his door. "I was frightened," continued the old man, "and the strange bargain would not let me sleep. I slipped softly to the window, and looked towards the river. Great clouds were driving restlessly through the sky, and the distant woods were rustling fearfully; it was as if my cottage shook, and moans and lamentations glided round it. On a sudden, I perceived a white streaming light, that grew broader and broader, like many thousands of falling stars; sparkling and waving, it proceeded forward from the dark Fir-ground, moved over the fields, and spread itself along towards the river. Then I heard a trampling, a jingling, a bustling,

and rushing, nearer and nearer; it went forwards to my boat, and all stept into it, men and women, as it seemed, and children; and the tall stranger ferried them over. In the river were by the boat swimming many thousands of glittering forms; in the air white clouds and lights were wavering; and all lamented and bewailed that they must travel forth so far, far away, and leave their beloved dwelling. The noise of the rudder and the water creaked and gurgled between-whiles, and then suddenly there would be silence. Many a time the boat landed, and went back, and was again laden; many heavy casks, too, they took along with them, which multitudes of horrid-looking little fellows carried and rolled; whether they were devils or goblins, Heaven only knows. Then came, in waving brightness, a stately freight; it seemed an old man, mounted on a small white horse, and all were crowding round him. I saw nothing of the horse but its head; for the rest of it was covered with costly glittering cloths and trappings: on his brow the old man had a crown, so bright that, as he came across, I thought the sun was rising there, and the redness of the dawn glimmering in my eyes. Thus it went on all night; I at last fell asleep in the tumult, half in joy, half in terror. In the morning all was still; but the river is, as it were, run off, and I know not how I am to steer my boat in it now."

The same year there came a blight; the woods died away, the springs ran dry; and the scene, which had once been the joy of every traveller, was in autumn standing waste, naked and bald; scarcely showing here and there, in the sea of sand, a spot or two where grass, with a dingy greenness, still grew up. The fruit-trees all withered, the vines faded away, and the aspect of the place became so melancholy, that the Count, with his people, next year left the castle, which in time decayed and fell to ruins.

Elfrida gazed on her rose day and night with deep longing, and thought of her kind playmate; and as it drooped

and withered, so did she also hang her head; and before the spring the little maiden had herself faded away. Mary often stood upon the spot before the hut, and wept for the happiness that had departed. She wasted herself away like her child, and in a few years she too was gone. Old Martin, with his son-in-law, returned to the quarter where he had lived before.

JOHANN HEINRICH DANIEL ZSCHOKKE

(1770–1848)

THE INN AT CRANSAC

(Translated by M. A. Faber)

"WHAT place is that before us?" I inquired of the post-boy.

"Cransac, Captain."

"Cransac? Can one remain there comfortably for the night?"

"I believe you can. It is the best of inns; none better to be found far or near."

This was pleasant hearing, for I was very tired. It is no trifle, when only half recovered from an illness, to be obliged to start off and take a journey of several hundred miles. My regiment was quartered in Perpignan, and I was coming from Nantes. A good long distance! And from Perpignan a very agreeable pilgrimage at the head of my company awaited me through that odious Catalonia, in which so many a brave Frenchman had already found a grave.

We drove into the little place, which is situated very pleasantly at the foot of a copse-covered hill. We stopped in front of a pretty house. Thomas, my servant, sprang down, and let me out of the carriage. The landlord, a prepossessing man, conducted me into an apartment so soon as he had given orders to his people about my luggage. Within the room, which was very cheerful, spacious, and clean, every part was full of little girls. Some sat on the table, some under

the table, some had clambered up to the window, some of the smallest sat and played on the floor. A well-grown girl of sixteen held a child of a year old in her arms, and was dancing about with it among the others. In one corner sat a young man who, his head leaning on his breast, seemed to be deep in thought, and troubled himself very little about the noise of the children or the grace of the dancer.

"Quiet there!" cried the landlord, as he entered the room with me. "Annette, take the noisy troop out of doors! And you, Fanny, prepare a room for this strange gentleman; number eight. He will remain for the night."

At this order Annette, a pretty damsel of about fourteen, led the whole swarm of little ones outside. Fanny, the dancer, only made an easy, graceful curtsey by way of greeting, danced up to the meditative young man, and said, "Good Mr. Philosopher, condescend to amuse my youngest sister for a little while. I trust you will prove yourself gallant." And with these words she seated the child, whom she had till now held in her arms, on his lap. This did not appear to be a very acceptable charge, but he undertook it.

"You are richly blessed, mine host," said I; and I pointed to the joyous troop of little ones. "Are they all yours?"

"I should be well enough pleased, if only for the curiosity of the thing," replied M. Albret, for such was the landlord's name. "But only about half of them belong to me; the other half are playmates who have come to spend the birthday of my third daughter."

"And how many children have you, M. Albret?"

"Six girls—no more."

"Heaven help you! All girls! Six girls!"

"Thank Heaven! you should rather say, Captain. A father could desire no happier fate, if the girls be pretty. For some portion of their brilliancy is reflected upon him. Every one courts him, because every one is thinking of the girls. I have already observed that my Fanny wins this for

me. When she shall have taken wing, they will play the agreeable for Annette. When Annette has flown, then for Juliette; she gone, for Kate; then for Celestine, then for Lisette, then for whoever may follow."

"But confess, M. Albret, that the prospect is not a pleasant one of being obliged to give them all up, one after another, to husbands; and of losing them from the house."

"Nay, I look at it in quite a different light from what you do. When I give away a daughter I put out my capital to interest. I shall become a grandfather. That is a fresh enjoyment of life."

"You try to console yourself, M. Albret. But six handsome boys, instead of girls, would have made you very proud."

"Boys! Heaven forbid! The wild fellows would make me grey-headed before my time with their romps and lubber-tricks, whilst with my daughters I grow young again. When my boys grew up one would become shrivelled up over accounts as a merchant; another become crippled for his country; a third even be killed; a fourth travel over land and sea; a fifth become a jovial spendthrift; a sixth would be sharper than his father. That would not answer."

Fanny now came dancing in, curtseyed prettily to me, and said, "Your room is arranged, you have only to take possession of it." The landlord was called away at this moment. I took up my hat to go to my room.

"If you will allow me," said Fanny. "I will do myself the honour of showing it to you." Then with two bounds she stood before the man to whom she had given the child. "Mr. Philosopher, you are very impolite to your little lady. See how Lisette is smiling at you. Kiss her hand directly, and beg her pardon." So saying, she took hold of the little hand of the child, and put it to his lips. The man smiled gloomily, and scarcely looked up.

She then skipped back to me, and said, "I have the honour." And she flew up the staircase before me. She

then opened the door of a small, cheerful room. But she had some time to wait before I came up with her. I excused for the delay. I was only half recovered from an illness.

"You will soon be completely restored here," said she. "The baths at Cransac work wonders, as you know."

"I never heard a word of them, fair Fanny," said I. "Then you have medicinal waters here, have you?"

"The most celebrated in the whole world. People come here from Toulouse and Montpellier. No one ever leaves us without being thoroughly cured and pleased."

"But who would be pleased to leave you, pretty Fanny?"

"Leave me to settle that, if need be, Captain. I understand how to tease people till they are glad to be rid of me."

"Oh! I beg, do me the honour of teasing me a little."

"That may happen. But now I must go and take my little sister away from the philosopher downstairs."

"If I may venture to ask, who is the gentleman that you call the philosopher?"

"An extremely, amiable, clever, agreeable young man, whose only fault is that he cannot laugh; seldom speaks; and when he does speak, is pleased with nothing. His name is Herr von Orny, he is a visitor to the baths, and wishes them where he should not because they smell of sulphur."

With these words she dropped a curtsey, and disappeared.

I confess the little girl was charming enough to tease any man. I resolved to remain in Cransac for the following day, and to try the baths. Where could I find better company or better entertainment? I was in need also of recreation.

But in the solitude of my room I became weary. I went out that I might at least see the pretty ladybird, Fanny. She was flitting about, goodness knows where. No one remained to amuse me but Herr von Orny, who was drumming a march with his fingers on the window-pane. I inquired of him the nature of the waters. He said, "They have a strong smell like rotten eggs." I said that I had not

come exactly for the sake of the baths. "So much the better for you," he replied. I observed that the country round seemed to be pretty. He answered, "What does that signify? the people are so much the more disagreeable."

"Yet one might well endure a Fanny," I added.

"As well as a hornet that buzzes around one's head."

As I turned from him, Herr von Orny uttered a loud cry. I started in alarm. I would have sprung to him. There stood Fanny beside him with affectionate, yet threatening gestures: in her extended hand, a pin which she had stuck into the back of his shoulder. "Are you then aware, sir, that we hornets can sting? This is the smallest of my punishments; tremble at the thoughts of the greatest."

"You would then pierce his heart," said I.

"Oh! one could pierce none with Herr von Orny," she replied, and went away quickly.

The young man grumbled something, and left the room. A strange scene indeed to me. Never before had I beheld a man of his age, endowed by nature with birth, breeding, and a pleasing exterior, so insensible to the fun of a pretty girl.

Alone I would not remain. I went out of doors, examined the premises round the house from very ennui, and went into the garden adjoining it, where Fanny's youngest sister, Annette, was watering flowers. I watched the young girl's industry with pleasure. I deemed the father blessed. This angelic being, on the verge of quitting childhood, retained all its harmlessness and innocence even while already budding into the beauty of womanhood; whilst flitting about among her flowers, she would have formed for Leonardo da Vinci's picture of the Virgin at the Sepulchre, a model more attractive, more ideal, than are any of his figures.

"Who is it?" she asked when she heard my step, but without turning round.

"A thief," said I.

"What would he steal?" asked she, laughing, still without looking at me.

"Annette's prettiest flower."

She now put down her pot, and came towards me half timidly, and said, "I would like to see it myself then."

I cast my eyes around, and perceived a half-blown moss-rose. "May I break it off?" I asked.

"A thief would not ask," was her reply, and she reached a small pair of scissors for cutting it.

"I do not steal it for myself," said I.

"To whom then do you wish to give the rose?" she asked.

"To the prettiest girl in Cransac."

"Well, sir, I must give leave for that. But do you know the girls in Cransac already? You have hardly been here an hour yet."

"I only know her who is the prettiest of all."

"You make me very curious, sir; will you allow me to accompany you?"

"I will only ask you to remain still for a moment," replied I; and I hastily placed the rose in the ribbon round her head which confined her luxuriant brown tresses.

"You are wrong! you are wrong! My sister Fanny is the prettiest of all."

"How can you contradict me, lovely Annette? Can you be allowed to judge in your own cause? If I choose to declare that you are the beauty of beauties in Cransac, what can you say against it?"

"Nothing but that you must show me who is, in your opinion, the next prettiest."

Thus the dispute went on. But she was forced to keep the rose. She then led me round to see all her flowery treasures. We became friends in a short time. Before evening I was so with the whole family. Madame Albret, the mother of six children, was a graceful little woman; chatty, full of spirits, and lively like the rest. That morose

fellow Orny, alone took no part in the jokes, amid all our laughter.

The one day at Cransac became eight. I packed up every evening for the following morning, and as punctually unpacked again in the morning. Fanny kept her word faithfully, and teased me even more cruelly than her philosopher, who remained indifferent to all her raillery. Never was I more painfully, nor more pleasantly teased. How could I see the pretty, gentle, graceful, merry slyph play off her little tricks on me unnoticed? I felt how dangerous she was becoming to my peace of mind, and armed myself in vain. She herself, only entering on her sixteenth year, perceived nothing of this. She trifled with Cupid's arrows, not knowing how formidable they were. To all the witching grace of a young woman she united the light-hearted nature of a child. Whatever of tenderness one might say to her, her mischief turned the serious into comic.

I often fancied that an interest in me had been aroused within her; when she was silent, when her glance rested on me with satisfaction, or when a smile of unutterable pathos beaming from her eyes seemed to say, "Understand me, Doubter!" But by no means. This was only kindness; a certain true-heartedness which, with her want of knowledge of the world, arose from a delicacy of mind. She remained the same; and felt no more warmly towards me than she did towards others to whom she wished well. Over-anxious to please she was not, nor had she any occasion to be. For she pleased every one and won all hearts, and knew that she did so. This did not make her vain; but only excited within her a grateful kindliness towards every one, such as children feel with whom every one is ready to have a game of play. And the womanly tenderness of feeling, the maidenly nobility of soul, which are ever wont to be united with innocence of heart, gave even to her playfulness a dignity which allowed no one to forget that he could never venture

to overstep the bounds of strict propriety without for ever forfeiting her esteem.

Sometimes it seemed as though the young man-hater von Orny had a stronger claim upon her than any one else. I must own that he was a man whose exterior might well attract. Even his gloomy mood gave him something of interest. Though nothing went right with him, he always did what was right; and though he was continually grumbling, he was the best-hearted fellow in the world. I once went into the room when Fanny, pushing back his hair from his forehead, tried with her hand to smooth the wrinkles on his brow, whilst he sat with folded arms and would not even look at her. I confess that the sight of this familiarity excited in me something of jealous vexation. She, however, thought so little harm that, when her parents entered at almost the same moment as myself, she did not even change her position in the least, but carried on her amusement, at which we could not help laughing. When his departure became the subject of conversation, she was so indifferent that, with her own peculiar sort of comic-earnest, she gave him this advice: "Go with the Captain to Spain. That is the real paradise of misanthropes. They kill each other wherever they meet, and, Herr von Orny, you will certainly, in one way or another get quit of your fellow-men there."

Her sister Annette had the same undisturbed cheerfulness, the same liveliness, and the same gracefulness of mind; but she was even more childlike. She evinced therefore greater warmth of feeling than Fanny. There was a surprising dignity about this innocent child. Her features were regular. One might say that she was prettier than Fanny, but it would be impossible to say which of the two was the more lovable.

It gave me great pleasure to watch the differences and the peculiarities of these two young creatures. Annette attached herself more to me. Herr von Orny was less pleasing to her on account of his sometimes strange moods. "They are

contrary to my taste," said she. "I like the sky to be ever blue and cloudless." With childlike confidence she imparted all her little secrets to me, and asked for my advice about everything she told me. I must even give my opinion as to her dress, and what was most becoming to her.

The child fascinated me greatly; and when at last, on the eighth day of my stay at Cransac, I signified my unalterable intention to take my departure, Annette knew how to entreat so prettily, and so earnestly, that I found myself compelled to yield to her; provided that Orny, who had resolved on making the journey to Perpignan with me, and who pressed forward our departure more than I did, would concede two days longer.

I was astonished when Orny himself came and begged of me a respite of some few days. "Have you allowed yourself to be persuaded by Annette?" I asked. "I should not have expected it from your iron nature."

"Ah?" said he, and he passed his hand across his face as though to wipe away a faint smile that gleamed upon it. "I could not refuse the poor child when my denial at last brought her tears. I was obliged then to enter on terms of capitulation with the little witch, and she coaxed me out of another eight days, under promise that she would not then utter a syllable of opposition. When at last I had consented—and how was anything else possible?—she threw her arms round my neck with insane delight, and gave me a kiss forthwith. She was quite beside herself."

"Ah!" said I, "for such a price one might well dispose of oneself, or of a fellow-traveller either."

"It remains with you, Captain, to go if you wish it. My promise binds me. Still it would be a great pleasure to me to accompany you on your journey to Perpignan."

I assured him that the gratification of his society was too great for me not to be willing to delay a week longer; not to mention that the quiet had a beneficial effect on my yet scarcely restored health.

When soon afterwards I again saw Annette, she skipped and danced towards me with an air of triumph.

"Well, sir, so one of us girls can tame even a half-wild creature like Herr von Orny!" she said, laughing.

"I can easily believe it: by means of the powerful weapons with which you laid siege to him you would have made an easy conquest of me also. Yet I envy him a little for the way in which you brought him to capitulate, as also for the thanks you accorded him." She smiled silently and thoughtfully at me, with an air of indescribable loveliness.

"At least," continued I, "without any injustice I deem myself entitled to implore as sweet a recompense as was bestowed upon him unasked."

She gazed at me earnestly, with a strange penetrating look, whilst a delicate blush overspread her angelic countenance. Suddenly she turned away, and went off dancing, and warbling a popular melody. I did not receive the reward. Now, first I suspected that, with her as with her elder sister Fanny, I had been like the good-natured fool in the play, taking to my own credit what had been simply the result of interest in Orny. I composed my mind.

The eight days passed quickly away. I often repented afterwards of having prolonged the time of my stay in Cransac with this charming family. For these kindly hearts entwined themselves daily more and more closely round my own. Fanny's beauty made the liveliest impression upon me. I loved the little girl with ever-increasing fervency; and was all the more unhappy because I convinced myself that she had not the slightest idea what the passion of love was. She was not reserved, nor yet cordial as she had been on the first day. She appeared rather to keep more closely to the melancholy Orny, and to behave to him something as young girls are wont to behave, without giving it a thought, in their intercourse with old people. Yet in truth, Orny was no older than myself, nor was I younger than he.

I acknowledge that, until now, I had amused myself with women without understanding myself. But Fanny was my first real love. I had need of all my self-control not to make myself ridiculous. Meanwhile the time for parting came; and indeed I was glad that it should come, however bitter it might be to my own heart.

M. and Madame Albret were as friendly in their leave-taking as they had been in their greeting. Orny, as distant, as cold as anywhere one could be when leaving an inn to continue a journey. Fanny, who never showed herself more attractive than at this moment in which I was about to take leave of her for ever, appeared in quite a new character. She wished each of us a prosperous journey with equal kindliness, volunteered several notions of her own respecting it, and seemed determined to soften as far as possible the disagreeables of leave-taking, unavoidable when persons are separating who have been living in the same house for several happy days, and even weeks.

But little Annette betrayed more emotion and agitation. She held my hand for a considerable time, then went hastily away. When after a short absence, she returned, she brought a newly-blown moss-rose, and gave it to me with one hand, whilst, with the other, she showed me a faded rose, which I instantly recognised as that which I had given her on the day of my arrival. She did not utter a word. Her countenance was full of melancholy. When I kissed her hand in adieu, she threw her arms around my neck, kissed me, sobbed deeply, and turned away.

Now I also, for the first time, noticed tears in Fanny's eyes, and in those of her mother.

We got into the carriage, it drove off.

For the first hour we talked but very little. Herr von Orny sat sullen in one corner of the carriage, I in the other. I was glad of it. I was also glad that in his presence I was forced to control myself; for I felt that I could have wept like

a child. Fanny, with her tearful face, seemed to me to be hovering about the carriage.

Things were already brighter with me on the next day. We stopped at Toulouse, and at ill-built Carcasonne. My travelling companion, in addition to not being talkative, never opened his lips but when he found something to grumble at. "People only torment each other with their follies and misdeeds," said he. "It is so alike in palaces and cottages. I am perhaps a torment to others; but I am so because they are torments to me."

"Yet the lovely little Fanny did not seem to be a torment to you," I replied. "Or were you barbarous enough to be unjust even to the most harmless being under heaven?"

"I do not deny," answered he, "that children are to our world as angels of light to souls in torment. And Fanny is a perfect child. I avoided the little girl, because I never in my life have seen one more deserving of good training. I would have stayed longer in Cransac, for the retirement of the little place suited me, as did a sort of heavy manner in the people, who are at least ignorant how to varnish over their follies and tricks. But I did not stay, because Fanny was there."

"What a contradiction!" said I.

"Not at all," he replied. "The little girl would perhaps only have become an apt pupil that she might destroy all the fruit of my painfully earned knowledge of the world, and of myself; that she might make a fool of me, or double my misery."

He spoke thus, then stopped short. I tried in vain to beguile him into further talk of the Albret family, with whom he had lived for nearly three months. He either would not answer at all; or only did so by a nod of the head, or shrug of the shoulders.

As he had already said at Cransac, his intention was to travel with me to Perpignan in order to leave me there. His business I did not know. At the second stage after Car-

casonne he found in the posting-house a map of the country hanging on the wall. He stood before it for a long time; rubbed his forehead, then wrote something in his pocket-book, came up to me, and said, "It is best so. I will go to Marseilles, and from thence to Italy."

Yet he again seated himself by my side in the carriage. We drove on, till deep into the night. The moon shone brightly. There was something solemnly beautiful in traversing the line of mountains whose forests and peaks rose in sharp outline of mass and point against the clear sky.

Suddenly Herr von Orny, who had appeared until now to be asleep, turned towards the door of the carriage to look at the country.

"What is that ruin yonder on the hill?" he called to the post-boy.

"The Castle Loubre," replied he.

"Good!" said Herr von Orny. "Then beyond is the road to Siegean?"

"Exactly so," returned the post-boy. "It is scarcely a month yet since, one bright moonlight night like this, a coach full of travellers was attacked by robbers on that road. My brother-in-law, Matthew, who drove it, was murdered."

"And are we not further from Belloc?" interrupted Orny.

"A short half league," replied the post-boy.

Orny threw himself back into his corner of the carriage again, and said no more.

I gazed attentively at the gloomy, gigantic, towering ruins of the old Castle. Rising amid the still, wild solitude, and illumined weirdly by the moonlight, they presented a truly fearful appearance. Indeed I have never beheld similar ruins without experiencing a peculiar sensation of mingled awe and melancholy. For I reflect involuntarily on the long tale of years, and on the days of trial, of those who once wept and laughed, were born and died within their walls, from grandfather to grandson. And the vast contemplation of the transitory nature of all that is earthly

closes at last with a view of the decay even of their very home.

"But this Castle does not seem to me to have been standing empty very long," said I to the post-boy.

"So far as I know, it is about eight or twelve years since it was burned down, with all in it," answered he.

"How dreadful! And through what accident did such a calamity happen?" I inquired further.

He returned, "How? The country people had flocked together at the outbreak of the revolution. The lady was hated because of her harshness and austerity. The Castle was stormed, and everything burnt. It was to a rich Countess that the Castle belonged. She also was burnt.

"False!" cried Orny suddenly, close beside me.

"Well, sir," replied the man, "I know it from the lips of trustworthy people who related the tale to me. A young man also who was born in the Castle, and was said to be the son of the Countess, only she would not acknowledge him, was burnt with her. This has been told me by very reliable persons, who had every means of knowing the truth."

"They told lies!" exclaimed Herr von Orny.

"Upon my word, if you do not choose to believe me, or if you know better than I do, what do you ask me questions for?" muttered the post-boy angrily; he then turned round to his horses, gave them a cut with the whip, and galloped them on with a jerk.

"Then are you acquainted with the ruin?" said I to Herr von Orny.

"Very well," he replied. "Since I am myself the son who is said to have been burnt there."

"What! You yourself are the son and grandson of the old inhabitants of that Castle!" I cried in astonishment.

The story, and this incident, made a deep impression on me.

"I am no one's son!" he murmured.

"But you said just now that you were——"

"Ah, yes, !" he replied: "there is no contradiction in it."

He seemed to observe my curiosity; and, which pleased me very much, gratified it by the following narration, without waiting to be pressed.

Until my fifteenth year I was educated by the clergyman of that village the lights of which we saw about half an hour ago gleaming on our right amid the darkness. I supposed him to be a near relative, or indeed my father: for he had no occasion to add to his duties. I was wrong. I discovered afterwards that I was the child of totally different persons; that I had been brought to him when in my fourth year; that he had received regularly a handsome sum of money for me; that he was even under engagement to give me the best of educations.

When I questioned him about my parents, he usually only replied, "My child, you ask too much. Your parents died long since. I never knew them. You were given in charge to me. A considerable salary is paid to me for you. Therefore I imagine that you will possess a good property. But of what value, and where, you will only learn when you are older."

I loved the venerable man very much. My young heart felt the need of attaching itself to another. It was not good for me that I had no parents, no creature to whom I was nearly related. I envied the poor children in the village their good fortune in being able to feel themselves kissed by a mother's lips, embraced in a mother's arms.

The pious old gentleman gave me a very good education after his fashion. He instructed me in languages and in the sciences. When I was fifteen, he took me to Montpellier, a year afterwards to Toulouse, in order to complete my intellectual training. After this I beheld him no more. He died. I then regularly received a fixed sum of money quarterly from a banker to whom the clergyman had given me references. I believed for a long time that I was in-

debted for this to my venerable foster-father. But I learned from the banker that sometimes one, and sometimes another Paris house sent orders to my credit.

I was happy. Who would not be so at that age? My passions were just awakening. I had a fervid imagination. I was a poet. The world lay before me bathed in rosy light. I revelled in exquisite illusions. I knew nothing of my fellowmen. I loved them all with the unreserved ardour of my soul. I had more money than I wanted. I could live comfortably myself, and help others also. I had a friend to whom I was attached with all my heart: and what was even more, I had for the first time attained the happiness of loving, and of being loved. All the delights of existence were then opening before me. Truly now I seem to myself to have been a madman.

A few weeks destroyed my paradise, and brought me to my senses. I had entered on my nineteenth year. My beloved one (whom I now not loved, but adored) was of very good birth; but, with her mother (the widow of a Major), in limited circumstances. I resolved to seek an appointment; and, so soon as I should have obtained one, to entreat the hand of my beloved, that my happiness might be complete. She had been able, since I had made their acquaintance, to live very comfortably and without anxiety, with her mother; for, without her being aware of it, I had bestowed the greater portion of my income upon her. For this purpose I employed my friend and confidant. He was to find ways and means to give the family assistance in such a manner as that my name should remain concealed. I feared to injure the delicate relations between us, if I appeared before my beloved as a benefactor.

Meanwhile I was ignorant that my bosom friend maintained both mother and daughter, in every sense, with my money; that he made use of their poverty and my wealth to obtain the daughter for himself; that whilst I in all humility, reverenced her for her innocence and piety, she

was deceiving me; that I was designed, as being a simple fool, to become her husband should her scandalous flirtations prove too notorious. All this I discovered quite unexpectedly, and quite accidentally, on the very morning of her birthday, when I was on the point of giving her a birthday present. I fled with horror. I was in despair. I was seized with a violent fever. After my recovery I learned from other people, with whom I had not previously been intimate, the history of my wrongs. Both the traitors made efforts to renew the intimacy with me. I repulsed both. From that day this Judas became my most bitter foe. He insulted me publicly. We fought. I shot him through the arm. Whilst still bleeding, he vowed death and destruction to me.

At this time I received a visit which removed me from Toulouse. One day a traveller came to me. When I had proved to him that I was really the person whom he sought (in order to do so I was obliged to go with him to the banker from whom I was in the habit of receiving my income), he gained confidence.

"Herr von Orny," said he, "I am deputed to hand over to you this sealed packet. You will be so kind as to give me an acknowledgment of the receipt of it."

I took the packet, and gave the acknowledgment. He then said, "Herr von Orny, you will do well to betake yourself at once to the Countess von Loubre, and to make her acknowledge your rights as her son. The Countess is your mother. The proofs thereof, from the hand of your father who died lately in Scotland, are in this packet. They cannot be gainsaid. The payments hitherto made to you will cease from this time: it is your mother's business to provide for you in the future." This is what he said.

"Where is my mother? Where shall I find my mother?" I exclaimed in joyful surprise and astonishment. Heaven alone knows what I felt. The traveller told me that she certainly had lived in Paris for eighteen years; and now,

after a long absence, had, on account of domestic affairs, gone for the first time to Languedoc, to her family seat, Castle Loubre, where she would only remain for a few months.

In vain did I tease the traveller with questions about my father, my mother, and their relatives. He knew nothing of any of them, had not even met them personally. He was but executing a commission probably from the family of my deceased father. The messenger himself was not French, but English. He had fulfilled his commission, and he left me.

Neither did the packet, which I broke with trembling hands, give me any information as to the circumstances of my parents, nor as to why they had so long delayed acknowledging me as their son. I found in it explanations in the handwriting of my father; letters concerning me in the handwriting of the Countess; certificates of baptism; depositions of my nurse; of a farmer's family unknown to me, but with whom I had probably been boarded until my fourth year; certificates from my venerable foster-father, the clergyman; and others papers which indisputably proved if not the legitimacy, yet the authentic facts, of my birth.

Oh! how joyfully I quitted that, to me, hateful Toulouse! I had lost a friend and my love, but had now found a mother. I remembered sometimes in my boyhood, when I was living with the old clergyman, to have heard of the Countess at the Castle Loubre. At that time it was only known that she had been as beautiful as unfortunate Now I could plainly see that I myself might have been more or less the cause of her unhappiness.

I arrived. I betook myself tremblingly to the Castle. I sent in my name to the Countess. During the whole of my journey I had been rehearsing the part I would act before sinking on my mother's breast as her newly-found son. I dreaded lest surprise and rapture should break my mother's heart.

I was conducted to her apartment. The Countess entered: a dignified figure inspiring me with awe, and still retaining so much of youthful beauty that I could scarcely believe her the being to whom I owed my existence. She was not yet thirty-nine years of age, and looked like a person who had scarcely reached thirty.

I advanced towards her. My heart was full of anxiety. I wished to gaze at her; but tears of joy dimmed my eyes. I would have spoken, but my voice failed from excess of emotion. I faltered forth my name. I told her from whence I came. I asked whether she had mourned a lost son. I sank on my knees beside her, stammering the name of mother.

"Young man," replied she calmly, "you are mistaken. It is true that I am the Countess whom you seek; but I was never married, and am not so now; still less have I ever had a son, consequently have never lost one. No doubt some person has taken leave to play off an unseemly joke on your credulity, or has wished to make use of you as a tool to insult me. Rise."

I stood up, but was quite confounded by her words. I had some difficulty in regaining my self-possession. I saw that she was perturbed and full of thought; but in her mien there was none of the disquietude of a mother on the point of embracing a long-lost son, only the uneasiness of despair and of mortally-wounded pride. She treated me as one who had been hoaxed, or who was really perhaps half a fool. This annoyed me. But I attributed it to my own conduct, to my over-haste, my embarrassment, that the Countess had assumed such a tone. I then calmly and quietly explained my circumstances to her, I showed her some of her own letters among my papers; different certificates; her own written declaration that she would undertake to provide for me when I should come of age, and would, during her lifetime, insure me a good share of her property, so that I might not one day be deprived of my inheritance by her

family. I then showed her a deed in my favour, formally signed by herself, for an annual income of fifteen thousand livres which, by the desire of my father, she had for nearly ten years sent to him for me. But in the deed I did not appear as her son; this point was only made clear by her letters, and by some of the accompanying depositions. I then requested to know what were her wishes.

She was indescribably perplexed. "Young man," she at last said, "I never was married. You will see that I cannot pronounce you my son, and expose myself in my old age to public scorn and disgrace. You are in possession of papers which, you must perceive, it is necessary that I should first satisfy myself thoroughly as to the nature of these documents, as also of your identity. Leave your papers with me for a short time for my examination. In the meanwhile I will provide accommodation for you in the Castle.

She spoke thus. Now I first plainly perceived that she could not disclaim me, but that she might look on me as a blot upon her life, and renounce me; that it was important to her to get those documents, my only legal proof, into her power.

I put the paper into my pocket; expressed to her my astonishment that no emotion within her own breast should plead for me; told her that I would not give up the papers except before a court of justice; that I gave her eight days for reflection; that I would await her summons at Siegean, and would then assert my claim if she did not allow the natural feelings of a mother to overrule her agitation respecting her previous life.

She stood speechless. I left her with a troubled mind. I heard her calling names of every kind after me, and giving orders: "Hold that man fast! Do not let him out of the Castle! Arrest him! Pursue him!" Servant-maids stared at me in terror, and called to the porter to shut the gate. I threw the old fellow down as I led out my horse. I mounted and galloped off. A shot was fired after me. I

looked round. At the Caste gate I saw servants and game-keepers; at the window above, the Countess, my wicked mother.

I had to wait in the miserable inn at Siegean for the appointed eight days. On the third night I was awakened from my sleep by a confused noise. A gleam of light shone on the ceiling. It came from a dark lantern. I flew like a madman from the bed, seized the table, swung it round, and struck out on all sides. The lantern fell to the ground with its bearer. Another man uttered a smothered cry. I fought with fury for a long time, until I became out of breath, and thought that I must now be left alone. I took up the lantern, and lighted my candles. On the ground lay a strange man. I took him for dead. I resolved to give the alarm, and began to dress myself hastily. Whilst doing so, I noticed that the stranger began to move. He had only been stunned by a heavy blow. I threw myself upon him, and searched him. He had about his person a pocket-pistol loaded, and a long knife. I bound him hand and foot with the cord of my trunk, so that he could not escape me. By this time he had come completely to himself. He groaned when he perceived his position. With the knife at his breast, I compelled him to confess what he wanted in my room. Not my money, not my life, but my papers were what he sought by order of the Countess. They had hoped to seize upon me unawares in my sleep, and terrify me.

On the ground lay a mask.

To spare the Countess, I gave no alarm. The fellow remained my prisoner and hostage. I wrote to the Countess by a messenger that she must within twenty-four hours appear herself here at Siegean in person, and redeem the prisoner by a reconciliation with me. A man invested with full powers came in her stead. An agreement was entered into. In the presence of notaries and witnesses I received in due form a surrender of the deed by which I came into possession of an income of fifteen thousand livres yearly.

But, on the other hand, I was obliged to leave all my papers sealed in the hands of the Countess.

Thus we parted. I now stood more alone in the world than ever. The only friend of my youth had deceived me. My love had been false to me. My mother had despised and disowned me.

All this happened in the first year of the Revolution. Since then I have travelled much about the world, and have found wickedness everywhere. In Paris I with difficulty escaped death. Judas was there, my former friend at Toulouse, now become a vehement apostle of liberty, and denouncer of the aristocracy. I took service with the Republican army, I made some expeditions with it, and was engaged on the Rhine against the Condés. In one of the encounters with *Emigrés*, I perceived Judas among them. He recognised me. "Have I got you at last?" cried he in a fury, and threw himself on me, I on him. Whilst we fought together, a soldier coming to my rescue, shot him down.

Now you have my history.

During this narrative we had reached the post-house of a small town. We resolved to enjoy some hours' rest here, and to proceed with early morning. This unhappy man had become endeared to me by his misfortunes.

Whilst we were sitting at breakfast on the following day, he began suddenly, "It is settled. I will go to Marseilles, and thence into Italy. I am about to leave you."

I felt sorry to be obliged to forego his society, but did not urge him to accompany me further. "Herr von Orny," said I, "you have inspired me with feelings of profound sympathy by your friendly confidence. I wish I were in a position to render you any service at all in proportion to my regard for you. But alas! I have nothing to offer than a word of good advice."

"What is it?" he asked gloomily.

"You are unhappy, very unhappy, since with all your

excellent qualities you have become the most unjust of men, only because as a young man you were deceived in some persons who accidentally became intimate with you. It commonly happens that he who begins by trusting too implicitly and too blindly, afterwards trusts and believes too little. One must not despise the whole world for the sake of some few contemptible men in it. How many a noble heart that would gladly have formed a friendship for you since then may you not have coldly repulsed! Do not go to Marseilles, do not go to Italy; you will not enjoy yourself. Go to Cransac. You will find healing there with the Albret family. They know you there. There they show forbearance to your weaknesses, there they honour your virtues. And you too know the family. Tell me, which member of it had any worse disposition than yourself? If then the worthy people at Cransac are as good as yourself, why do you struggle against the conviction that they, at least, are deserving of esteem?"

I spoke this in purest friendship. He was not offended. He only murmured a word or two to himself, and then went to order the horses. He accompanied me to the carriage. We embraced each other like old friends. He appeared to be affected. I pressed him once again to my heart, and said softly, "Your healing is in Cransac." Then I left him.

Arrived in Perpignan, I learned from the General that my regiment had left for Catalonia six days before. At the same time he gave me a pleasant surprise in a step of rank. The Emperor had promoted me to be Major. I hurried after the regiment and entered forthwith on my duties with it.

For two years we fought with the Spaniards, with varied success. I will not here give an account of our campaigns. They are well known, and in the immense crowd of events the exploits of individuals become forgotten. This only will I say, and because I speak from experience, that people do by far too much honour to the Spaniards when they laud their heroism to the skies; especially to the Catalonians,

against whom we were chiefly opposed. To possess courage is no great merit in a man, and not worth making a wonderment about. The Catalonians, and indeed the Spaniards generally, are not endowed with any greater courage and steadiness than other nations. But the great mass of them, especially in the villages, are bred up in poverty and want, in immorality and idleness, in ignorance and prejudices. Such people are but little concerned when their wretched huts are burnt down. For they can quickly rebuild them. If they have a couple of onions and a crust of bread, they are happy for the day. Consequently they fear no enemy; and have no longing for peace, because they have nothing to lose.

In civilised countries all is quite different.

The common class of Spaniard can in a war live at the cost of foreigners, plunder, take booty. Thus he has more than a time of peace can afford him. In wealthy countries, in the course of a war even the victors lose something of their wealth. For this reason the Spaniard is always more persevering in war than other nations. It is not the result of his heroism, his great courage, his patriotism. He scarce knows what these mean. He is born a slave to his superiors, to his priest. They lead him as they will by means of money, or by the influence of the place of torment, of purgatory, and of indulgences. His whole Christianity hangs on the tie of a rose-wreath. There are among the Spaniards lofty, noble, and generous spirits, but their number is exceedingly small. I pity these true-hearted men for being compelled to dwell among such compatriots.

We had severe service; almost daily marches and skirmishes. Both the soil and the climate of the country were against us. The happiest moments I passed were those in which I was alone, and could dream. Of Cransac and of Fanny. Her image was so enshrined in my memory, that times without number I cut out her likeness with the scissors in paper, and it was always a good one.

Moreover, even amid the tedium of a garrison I lived in

Spain a very secluded life. My comrades called me the Misanthrope. In truth I had almost become the very character from which I had wished to preserve Herr von Orny. But I had arrived at my mood by a very different road from his. I had become indifferent to society (yes, even avoided it as much as I could); not because I had been deceived, but because I had no hope of ever again meeting with such amiable people as the Albret family. He who has luxuriated in what is most costly, no longer seeks what is common. The death of my father, who left me a comfortable property, and the impossibility of withdrawing myself from the army, both tended to increase my present mood.

I remained in this uncomfortable condition for two years. They were fertile in events and achievements which, however, deserve rather to be forgotten than talked of. A bullet terminated my military career under the walls of Tarragona. Shortly before, I had received the order of the Legion of Honour; soon after, I obtained the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel. The fortifications of Tarragona were stormed; I was at the head of my battalion, when a musket-ball which struck my foot threw me to the ground. Those around had so much compassion for me as to carry me out of the action. My soldiers were attached to me. I lost much blood, and lay senseless for a considerable time. I was taken to Barcelona. At first it was a question whether the injured portion of my foot should be amputated. It was all the same to me. If they had told me I must die, I should have expressed no dissatisfaction. The thought of being obliged to hobble about on crutches a cripple for life had certainly nothing very enlivening in it.

Things changed. A young surgeon took a fancy to me, and boldly opposed his superiors, who wished to amputate my foot. The young man had more sense than his elders, not uncommon in this world. The gentlemen disputed for a long time. The head-surgeon maintained that I must

lose either my foot or my life; mortification would be inevitable. The young assistant-surgeon protested that both might be saved: only that the wounded foot remain stiff, and render me unfit for military service. At last they gave me the choice. I determined, even at the threatened peril of my life, to trust myself to the young surgeon. And I did well in this decision. I preserved both my foot and my life.

Meanwhile I received an honourable *retraite* with a pension. I was dragged from Barcelona to the baths, from the baths to Figueras and Perpignan. With the help of a crutch I could once more walk without pain, without being forced to limp. My foot only continued extremely weak. But this, together with a certain degree of stiffness, was wearing off by degrees.

I was advised to continue the use of mineral baths. I had determined on going home to take possession of my paternal inheritance. But as my property was well taken care of under the superintendence of a relative, I thought, not without some throbbings of the heart, of the baths at Cransac. I had already thought of them only too often. Yet many anxious reflections deterred me from going there. No doubt Fanny was already married. Doubtless the Albret family had changed very much in the lapse of four or five years. And even if Fanny were still free, what had I to hope from her? I had once loved her, but she had never loved me. I should again stake my contentment and peace of mind for a long time. Besides, Fanny might be dead. My heart trembled at the thought. Better for me to remain in ignorance. I was now as happy, as free from care, as with a stiff foot one well could be. No violent emotions disturbed me. The storm of first love had passed over. I was independent, and the world lay open before me.

I struggled with myself a long while: and at last, against the warnings of my judgment, determined to go whither my heart led me—to Cransac.

In a comfortable carriage which I found an opportunity of purchasing at Perpignan, and attended by my faithful Thomas, I travelled to Cransac. When at the end of a few days I at last saw the little place, which had so often occupied my thoughts, lying before me in the distance, an unusual thrill of anxiety disturbed me. I wished I were further off; and but little was wanting to make me give the post-boy orders to turn back again. It seemed a presentiment that it was not well for me to go there, that some misfortune awaited me. In vain did I seek to overcome my superstitious fears. I drove through the village, and stopped in front of the but too familiar inn with a beating heart.

It was a lovely Sunday in spring. The whole Albret family had gone to church, except—— She came to meet me as I entered. Whose heart would not have throbbed then? It was Fanny. No, it was not Fanny; it was an etherealised resemblance of Fanny. I had always pictured the maiden of scarce sixteen summers to my imagination; but what changes will not four years make! This was a perfect woman in grace, in softness, in dignity. I cannot describe the impression that this apparition made on me. I bowed silently, and stood speechless before her. She greeted me in her friendly manner, with her own peculiarly innocent, bewitching smile.

"Goodness! how lovely you have grown!" I said at last. "But do you not remember me?"

She had in truth recognised me as quickly as I her. Her blush, the joyous gleam in her eye betrayed her. "Do you take us for persons of such short memories?" said she: "only yesterday evening we were talking about you. We thought you were dead and lost, at least to us. What miracle has brought you back to us?"

"How can you ask?" said I, as I pressed her hand to my lips. "What miracle could it be, but the greatest miracle of beauty in the world? you yourself. Had I even fallen in

Spain you could have summoned my spirit back to this upper world."

"If that had been in my power," said she, laughing mischievously, "I would have been well on my guard against summoning you too quickly from purgatory, before you were purified from all love of flattering and had become as true as truth itself."

"Ah!" I cried, whilst we entered the room in which everything still remained in the well-remembered arrangement of olden times. "Let Spain do duty for purgatory, and let me find my heaven for ever here again; for I have had no peace since I left you."

"Then you are one of the fallen angels who left heaven for ambition's sake," she replied. "Who can engage that you will not again set a rebellion on foot, and exchange the tedium of heaven for the more exciting regions of Spain."

"For that I give no surety save the lovely queen of paradise herself; if she will look graciously on me, I will prove the most grateful of her subjects."

She held up her finger menacingly at me, and said, "You have indeed still much of the fallen angel left in you, and are come back even worse than when you left."

"Then reform me by your kindness. My return surely proves to you that I long to become better. If you do not thrust me out of paradise, I will never leave it again. Would you thrust me out?"

She blushed and did not reply.

"Would you thrust me out?" I asked, and gazed inquiringly at her.

She resumed her lively mood, and replied, "According as you behave well. We shall see. But I fear you have not learned much that is good in the school of the lovely Spanish ladies."

Whilst we were talking thus, the door opened. M. Albret, with his wife and some of his little daughters (all little Graces), came into the room. M. Albret and his wife

embraced me, as I did them, with affectionate cordiality and emotion. I was forced to relate to them how I came hither, what had befallen me. They stood around me, their faces beaming with joy. I could see how welcome I was to these kind people. The timid little girls drew nearer, but in vain did I seek among them for the sweet Annette. I scarce durst ask for her. I feared a reply which, even in my present mood, I would fain avoid. I feared lest her gentle spirit, too lovely, too pure, for this world should have winged its flight to a better, and yet I looked round on all sides in quest of her.

"You are seeking, Colonel——?" said M. Albret.

"One is wanting," I said, and checked myself.

"You are right," cried Madame Albret. "Fly, Juliette, and tell Fanny she must come directly, the friend of whom we were talking yesterday is with us." Juliette bounded away. "Goodness! how pleased Fanny will be," added Madame Albret.

I listened to these words with incredulous embarrassment. It must then have been Annette whom I had taken for Fanny. Yet surely I ought to have been able to calculate that after the lapse of four years Annette could no longer still be a little girl of fourteen, but must now be a young lady of eighteen. I do not know how I looked in my surprise. But they all observed my perplexity. I fixed my eye askance on her whom I had taken for Fanny. It was indeed Annette herself; but at this moment she became so grave, so pale, that I was frightened.

"Are you not well?" said I, and moved towards her. She passed her hand over her face, and forced a laugh. Her mother looked anxiously at her, and bade her go into the air. "You have startled the little girl," said M. Albret, "by your sudden appearance. It might have the same effect on Fanny. We must prepare her for it. The start might do her harm. I hope in a few months to be again gladdened by the arrival of a grandchild."

"What! Fanny is married?" I exclaimed.

"Have none of us yet told you that she has been married to Orny these two or three years?"

"To the Misanthrope?"

"Exactly so," replied M. Albret. "But she has worked a complete change in the queer fellow: no one could now be more agreeable. He is quite an altered man. He lives in Cransac, has purchased the most splendid villa we have in the place, and has taken up his residence here permanently. For I will not allow any of my daughters to leave Cransac; and the girls know it."

"M. Albret," said I in a low tone to him, and led him towards the window. "A word with you! May not a second pretty house perhaps be found for sale in Cransac?"

He laughed heartily at the question, looked at me for a moment, and then answered, "Only during the last few days have we been talking of the new house with a garden that you drove past on the great road before you came to the barrier. It was reported that that would be sold. But ask Annette, she knows more about it than I do."

Whilst I was renewing my acquaintance with the little girls, or rather making it, for they had all grown and altered during my absence, my old misanthrope Orny approached; on his arm a handsome young woman who carried a cherub of a year and a half old in her arms. It was—now indeed I recognised her—it was Fanny. We greeted each other affectionately, like intimate friends.

"I am largely your debtor," said Herr von Orny to me. "I hope you will at least give me the pleasure of showing my gratitude to you, and of welcoming you to my house as a guest. I have followed the advice you gave me at parting, and with great success. Do you recollect that you recommended instead of going to Italy to come to Cransac; that I should here find medicine to cure me? I went to Italy, but did not find it there. In Florence your words recurred to me. I came to Cransac, and found the medicine, and took

it, and it was not on the whole so very bad to take." With these words he kissed the glowing cheek of his lovely wife.

"Do not believe him altogether!" cried Fanny. "He still sometimes makes wry faces, and complains that the medicine is rather bitter."

"Because it was and is medicine," he answered, laughing.

They were a happy young couple. Orny invited me to dine with him. "The Albret family usually went to his house every Sunday. He told me that he had become reconciled to his Mother, and had brought her to his house. In the years of the Revolution she had lost the greater part of her property. This impelled him, immediately after his marriage with Fanny, and indeed at Fanny's request, to write to offer her a home with her. I became acquainted with her. She was an intellectual woman, in intercourse with whom one could trace the tone of the great world and also a certain pride of station; but under her many misfortunes she had attained a gentleness of spirit, a patient resignation to the trials appointed for her—a religious view of life made her all the more interesting.

At table a friendly strife was begun among the most amiable people in the world respecting me. Orny and Fanny insisted that so long as I should remain in Cransac I must stay with them. M. and Madame Albret maintained, with much eloquence, the force of their old claim. Even Juliette, Kate, and Celestine, the younger children of the Albret family, with whom I had soon become intimate, joined with childish vivacity in the war of words. She alone to whom I would most gladly have listened, whose word would at once have decided me, Annette, was silent. I looked inquiringly towards her, as though I wished to receive her orders. But she appeared so indifferent that I was pained. She only amused herself with the dispute as a listener who was in no way interested in it. And when the young Frau von Orny appealed to her for help on her side,

Annette answered laughingly, "You humble-minded little Fanny, why do you doubt your success? When did you ever need the aid of your sister to give you victory?" But jokingly and merrily as she said these words, there seemed to me, if I did not greatly deceive myself, to be a little bitterness—no, hardly bitterness, a slight expression of pain hovering around her lovely mouth, which I ought to have interpreted to my own advantage.

I foresaw that in the end the difficult decision would be thrown upon myself. So I begged to be allowed to flit from Albret's house to Orny's and back, as often as my lame foot would permit. A few hundred paces would be to me no distance from any of the beloved ones to whom in Catalonia even I had ever been near in spirit.

This last assertion might be questioned. And now for the first time I received a torrent of reproaches because that during four years I had not sent one single little word across the Pyrenees to Cransac. All showered these reproaches on me, Annette alone excepted. She rather took my part, only very maliciously.

"It was exactly because the Colonel was present with us in spirit," said she, "that he did not write: one never writes to those from whom one is not separated."

Now this defence evidently was not valid. My silhouettes that I had had cut in Spain now occurred to my mind, and I told how it had been my favourite amusement to make the family continually present with me. At this point I told a little fib; and in order to punish Annette for her malice, said that of all the silhouettes hers had always been the most successful. I immediately undertook to cut out her profile without looking at her. They took me at my word. Scissors and paper were brought. I reckoned on Annette's likeness to Fanny. I went to the window. In a few minutes the work was completed in which I had had very sufficient practice. I handed Annette's likeness to the pretty damsel herself.

She looked at it for a moment, shook her little head, and said: "That is Fanny."

The silhouette was passed from hand to hand, and every one said, "That is Fanny." I became embarrassed. Fanny made me a curtsey, and said, "That is me." Orny held up a threatening finger, and said, "I congratulate myself that I did not arrive too late," Madame Albret, in trying to make things better, made them worse. "Indeed," said she, "I see in it a strong likeness to Annette; only when Herr von Orny left us she was but a child of fourteen, and the silhouette rather resembles her at her present age. She did not wear her hair like that at that time, it was rather Fanny's style. But these are trifles."

"Important points," cried all. "Proof that he was only thinking of Fanny."

"No," replied I, "not so. Only proof that the image of the two, with their different characteristics of beauty, were blended into one in my memory; and if I were to open my trunk, I could still show you the carefully treasured rose that I took away as my single relic from Cransac, the rose that Miss Annette gave me on taking leave."

Annette's cheek glowed with consciousness. She cast a doubtful glance at me. Madame Albret said, "We have yours still in a frame and glass, wreathed round with pretty embroidery."

It pleased me that every one now was eager to give proofs of uninterrupted friendship and remembrance. Thus I escaped from a painful dilemma.

For I had indeed formerly admired Annette as an ideal of childlike beauty; but Fanny I had loved, Fanny I had always thought of, and had sought for again at Cransac. At the moment of my arrival I simply saw Fanny in Annette; but I saw her possessed of far more attractions than I had ever seen in her before. I loved her from that moment with greater intensity. It was a strange feeling when I became conscious of my mistake; and convinced myself that

Annette was the object that had fascinated me. I was in a state of painful half-stupefied expectation and tension; I saw the real Fanny again. But as soon as she appeared by the side of her husband, all was changed within me. The spell was broken. Fanny was still to me as a dear friend, but I could not myself understand how I ever could have made an idol of her. And if she had been now unmarried, I should have loved Annette alone, not Fanny. Even at the time of my first stay I had conceived a strange inexplicable interest in Annette, which I could neither account for nor describe. I loved Fanny as a pretty girl, Annette as an angelic being not created for this world, a being of a higher order, whom one could scarcely approach with earthly feelings.

Fanny was very happy with her husband. He was in paradise with her. The villa in which they lived was very pleasantly situated, surrounded by a large and pretty garden, roomy, cheerful, and built in good taste. Orny had also made many improvements in it. I went there almost every day, and walked among the shady paths in the garden when I came from the bath. I envied Orny his good fortune when I saw him wandering arm in arm confidingly with his young wife among the shrubs, or watched him beside her on the green mossy bank before their house, chatting with her. Then too I pictured my own happiness if I could but wander thus by the side of the lovely Annette; yet day by day, with expiring hope; for Annette loved me not. I stayed four weeks in Cransac, but found no change in her intercourse with me. I remained four weeks longer, but could seize no moment on any single occasion on which I could see her alone. Three months fled, and I lingered on, as though bound by some invisible spell, yet even further removed from her than on the first day.

As had been the case in my intercourse four years before with Fanny, so now with Annette. Like the former, the latter knew how to laugh off every serious expression, and

how to foil every attempt at an advance without appearing to do so purposely. What Fanny had often effected by means of her volatility, in not hearing, or not understanding what she did not choose to listen to, came much more easily to Annette, owing to her characteristic of truly childlike innocence, and to a certain dignity, which, blending wondrously with all that was lovely in her, and in her ways, inspired those who approached her with irresistible feelings of respect. So great was the power she exercised over me, that whenever I was in her presence I could be nothing but what she would have me be: that in the presence of the calm, pure, radiant angel of my love, I blushed for my passion as for an unholy feeling, an insanity.

So much the more was my heart torn and distracted. With appearance of autumn I gave up hope, and thought only of escaping from more intense suffering by flight. The peace of my life was destroyed.

I announced that the pressing invitations of my relatives summoned me to my paternal estate; and I prepared everything for my departure.

All bemoaned losing me, and Annette the same as the rest. They wished to make me promise that I would return again for some months to Cransac, at latest with the coming spring; but in this Annette did not join the others. I was in doubt whether perhaps she loved me, or whether she wished to be rid of me.

One morning I was walking with her and Fanny in Orny's garden. I stopped before a rose-bush, and said jestingly to her, "When I left Cransac the first time, you gave me a rose to take away with me. This time I shall not be able to receive one. The queen of flowers is gone. She has only left, like every joy when faded, the thorn behind."

Annette blushed and looked down embarrassed; but she quickly recovered herself, and answered with her own peculiarly winning smile, "It is my sister's turn this time."

Fanny was on the point of replying, when a little girl coming up, interrupted her, and called her away. Annette seemed as though inclined to follow her sister. But the latter went away quickly, saying, "I will be with you again in a moment. Meanwhile come to an amicable decision on this knotty point."

"Then I am to leave this time without any remembrance from you?" said I.

"Do you need one?" returned she.

"Not to remind me of you. Alas! everything will remind me that I am far from Annette. Yet this something from your own hand would render you in some slight degree less absent. There might perhaps lie in it some little consolation for me."

She smiled with a sly glance at me, and said, "Yet Annette who gave you the rose was not so present with you in Spain as Fanny who gave you nothing. Therefore I wish to exchange with Fanny. You see, I am selfish."

"And at that same time rather unjust, and very cruel. You know it, you feel it, and yet can be so. So that I wish now that I had never come back to Cransac; for it has made me unhappy, and perhaps for ever. Therefore I never will visit Cransac any more."

"You frighten me, dear Colonel. Why do you blame me?"

"Because you drive me from the place which is to me the dearest spot on earth."

"Heavens! what are you dreaming of? I drive you! Heaven forbid! The whole family are lamenting, and I no less than the others, that you are obliged to go."

"Whilst it depends on yourself alone whether I shall stay. Not for Fanny, not for all your family, but for you alone, will I and can I remain. One sign from you decides me. You know that I live for you alone, love you alone. The world has in it nothing so dear. Shall I stay?"

Annette cast down her eyes and walked silently by the gap between the clipped beeches.

"Shall I stay?" I asked more earnestly; and I took her hand.

She looked at me with grave dignity, and said, "Colonel, do not deceive yourself or me. What use is there in that? Acknowledge this frankly to yourself. You forgot Annette whilst in Spain, and thought only of Fanny."

"No. I thought of Annette, and did not forget Fanny. Annette's rosé has ever been my most sacred treasure, and shall go with me to the grave."

"But, Colonel, when you came back from Spain you took me for Fanny. Be honest with yourself."

"Yes, dear Annette, I did take you for Fanny; but I thought you lovelier than Fanny, more enchanting, more fascinating than Fanny. I felt joy at the award of the rose that I had given to you four years before, in preference to your sister. Ah! Annette, I worshipped you in Spain, not as an earthly being; but as an angel not belonging to this world. Believe me now, and at least pity me that my fate now divides me from you—that I never, never, can be worthy of you."

"Who said that?" asked she, turning her tearful eyes on me.

At this question, which sprang from the very depths of her heart, at these tears, I was filled with rapture. "O! Annette, shall I stay?"

"Do you ask again when I have been weak enough to betray my heart to you?" she asked, and she laid her head silently on my breast.

We were still locked in a close embrace when another pair of arms were thrown round us. Fanny had glided up; she flung her arms around us, and kissed first her sister, then me. "I hope, Annette," said she, "that you will not be angry if at last I give your timid swain a sisterly kiss."

Thus by common consent my departure came to nothing. Amid Fanny's merry, affectionate banterings we recovered

from our deep emotion. We returned to Herr von Orny. He said, "Now the joy of my life is complete!" An exclamation for which naturally enough Fanny gave him a severe lecture. Whilst they were squabbling, I went away for a moment, and flew near by to the possessor of the house mentioned to me by M. Albret as for sale. I had already visited it, and had looked through it several times. I should long ago have come to terms about it with the owner, who asked a moderate price, if I had had Annette's decision. He was there, and the purchase was agreed on, and terms put in writing on the spot. Then I came back.

Annette extended her hand to me; and, astonished at my sudden and long-continued disappearance, inquired, "Where have you been?"

"I have with all speed," whispered I, "purchased a pretty house and a garden full of the loveliest roses. From to-day it is yours."

She blushed with joy, and exclaimed, "Only think, he has bought the Dinants' house for us!"

We now returned with Orny to the inn in joyous procession. I related my purchase of a house to M. Albret and his wife. M. Albret looked keenly at Annette for a moment. She flew to her father, then to her mother's breast in happiness inexpressible.

From this day I date my days of heaven on earth. Annette is my wife. The inn at Cransac has made the happiness of Orny and myself. It may still make four other people happy.

ERNST THEODOR WILHELM HOFFMANN

(1776–1822)

THE HISTORY OF KRAKATUK

(Translated by WILLIAM MAKEPEACE THACKERAY)

PERLIPAT'S mother was the wife of a king—that is, a queen; and, in consequence, Perlipat, the moment she was born, was a princess by birth. The king was beside himself for joy as he saw his beautiful little daughter lying in her cradle; he danced about, and hopped on one leg, and sung out, 'Was anything ever so beautiful as my Perlipatkin?' And all the ministers, presidents, generals, and staff-officers, hopped likewise on one leg, and cried out, 'No, never!' However, the real fact is, that it is quite impossible, as long as the world lasts, that a princess should be born more beautiful than Perlipat. Her little face looked like a web of the most beautiful lilies and roses, her eyes were the brightest blue, and her hair was like curling threads of shining gold. Besides all this, Perlipat came into the world with two rows of pearly teeth, with which, two hours after her birth, she bit the lord chancellor's thumb so hard that he cried out, 'O gemini!' Some say he cried out, 'O dear!' but on this subject people's opinions are very much divided, even to the present day. In short, Perlipat bit the lord chancellor on the thumb, and all the kingdom immediately declared that she was the wittiest, sharpest, cleverest little girl, as well as the most beautiful. Now, everybody was delighted except the queen—she was anxious and

dispirited, and nobody knew the reason; everybody was puzzled to know why she caused Perlipat's cradle to be so strictly guarded. Besides having guards at the door, two nurses always sat close to the cradle, and six other nurses sat every night round the room; and what was most extraordinary, each of these six nurses was obliged to sit with a great tom-cat in her lap, and keep stroking him all night, to amuse him, and keep him awake.

Now, my dear little children, it is quite impossible that *you* should know why Perlipat's mother took all these precautions; but *I* know, and will tell you all about it. It happened that, once on a time, a great many excellent kings and agreeable princesses were assembled at the court of Perlipat's father, and their arrival was celebrated by all sorts of tournaments, and plays, and balls. The king, in order to show how rich he was, determined to treat them with a feast which should astonish them. So he privately sent for the upper court-cook-master, and ordered him to order the upper court-astronomer to fix the time for a general pig-killing, and a universal sausage-making; then he jumped into his carriage, and called, himself, on all the kings and queens; but he only asked them to eat a bit of mutton with him, in order to enjoy their surprise at the delightful entertainment he had prepared for them. Then he went to the queen, and said, 'You already know, my love, the partiality I entertain for sausages.' Now the queen knew perfectly well what he was going to say, which was that she herself (as indeed she had often done before) should undertake to superintend the sausage-making. So the first lord of the treasury was obliged to hand out the golden sausage-pot and the silver saucepans; and a large fire was made of sandal-wood; the queen put on her damask kitchen-pinafore; and soon after the sausage soup was steaming and boiling in the kettle. The delicious smell penetrated as far as the privy-council-chamber; the king was seized with such extreme delight, that he could not stand it any longer.

'With your leave,' said he, 'my lords and gentlemen'—jumped over the table, ran down into the kitchen, gave the queen a kiss, stirred about the sausage-brew with his golden sceptre, and then returned back to the privy-council-chamber in an easy and contented state of mind. The queen had now come to the point in the sausage-making, when the bacon was cut into little bits and roasted on little silver spits. The ladies of honour retired from the kitchen, for the queen, with a proper confidence in herself, and consideration for her royal husband, performed *alone* this important operation. But just when the bacon began to roast, a little whispering voice was heard, 'Sister, I am a queen as well as you, give me some roasted bacon, too;' then the queen knew it was Mrs. Mouserinks who was talking. Mrs. Mouserinks had lived a long time in the palace; she declared she was a relation of the king's, and a queen into the bargain, and she had a great number of attendants and courtiers underground. The queen was a mild, good-natured woman; and although she neither acknowledged Mrs. Mouserinks for a queen nor for a relation, yet she could not, on such a holiday as this, grudge her a little bit of bacon. So she said, 'Come out, Mrs. Mouserinks, and eat as much as you please of my bacon.' Out hops Mrs. Mouserinks, as merry as you please, jumped on the table, stretched out her pretty little paw, and ate one piece of bacon after the other, until, at last, the queen got quite tired of her. But then out came all Mrs. Mouserinks' relations, and her seven sons, ugly little fellows, and nibbled all over the bacon; while the poor queen was so frightened that she could not drive them away. Luckily, however, when there still remained a little bacon, the first lady of the bedchamber happened to come in, she drove all the mice away, and sent for the court mathematician, who divided the little that was left as equally as possible among all the sausages. Now sounded the drums and the trumpets; the princes and potentates who were invited rode forth in glittering garments, some under white

canopies, others in magnificent coaches, to the sausage feast. The king received them with hearty friendship and elegant politeness; then, as master of the land, with sceptre and crown, sat down at the head of the table. The first course was polonies. Even then it was remarked that the king grew paler and paler; his eyes were raised to heaven, his breast heaved with sighs; in fact, he seemed to be agitated by some deep and inward sorrow. But when the blood-puddings came on, he fell back in his chair, groaning and moaning, sighing and crying. Everybody rose from table; the physicians in ordinary in vain endeavoured to feel the king's pulse: a deep and unknown grief had taken possession of him.

At last—at last, after several attempts had been made, several violent remedies applied, such as burning feathers under his nose, and the like, the king came to himself, and almost inaudibly gasped out the words, 'Too little bacon!' Then the queen threw herself in despair at his feet: 'Oh, my poor unlucky royal husband,' said she, 'what sorrows have you had to endure! but see here the guilty one at your feet; strike—strike—and spare not. Mrs. Mouserinks and her seven sons, and all her relations, ate up the bacon, and—and——' Here the queen tumbled backwards in a fainting-fit! But the king arose in a violent passion, and said he, 'My lady of the bedchamber, explain this matter.' The lady of the bedchamber explained as far as she knew, and the king swore vengeance on Mrs. Mouserinks and her family for having eaten up the bacon which was destined for the sausages.

The lord chancellor was called upon to institute a suit against Mrs. Mouserinks and to confiscate the whole of her property; but as the king thought that this would not prevent her from eating his bacon, the whole affair was entrusted to the court machine and watch maker. This man promised, by a peculiar and extraordinary operation, to expel Mrs. Mouserinks and her family from the palace for

ever. He invented curious machines, in which pieces of roasted bacon were hung on little threads, and which he set round about the dwelling of Mrs. Mouserinks. But Mrs. Mouserinks was far too cunning not to see the artifices of the court watch and machine maker; still all her warnings, all her cautions, were vain; her seven sons, and a great number of her relations, deluded by the sweet smell of the bacon, entered the watch maker's machines, where, as soon as they bit at the bacon, a trap fell on them, and then they were quickly sent to judgment and execution in the kitchen. Mrs. Mouserinks, with the small remnants of her court, left the place of sorrow, doubt, and astonishment. The court was rejoiced; but the queen alone was sorrowful; for she knew well Mrs. Mouserinks' disposition, and that she would never allow the murder of her sons and relations to go unrevenged. It happened as she expected. One day, whilst she was cooking some tripe for the king, a dish to which he was particularly partial, appeared Mrs. Mouserinks and said, 'You have murdered my sons, you have killed my cousins and relations, take good care that the mouse, queen, do not bite your little princess in two. Take care.' After saying this, she disappeared; but the queen was so frightened, that she dropped the tripe into the fire, and thus for the second time Mrs. Mouserinks spoiled the dish the king liked best; and of course he was very angry. And now you know why the queen took such extraordinary care of princess Perlipatkin: was not she right to fear that Mrs. Mouserinks would fulfil her threat, come back, and bite the princess to death?

The machines of the machine maker were not of the slightest use against the clever and cunning Mrs. Mouserinks; but the court astronomer, who was also upper-astrologer and star-gazer, discovered that only the Tom-cat family could keep Mrs. Mouserinks from the princess's cradle; for this reason each of the nurses carried one of the sons of this family on her lap, and, by continually stroking

him down the back, managed to render the otherwise unpleasant court service less intolerable.

It was once at midnight, as one of the two chief nurses, who sat close by the cradle, awoke as it were from a deep sleep, everything around lay in profound repose; no purring, but the stillness of death; but how astonished was the chief nurse when she saw close before her a great ugly mouse, who stood upon his hind legs, and already had laid his hideous head on the face of the princess. With a shriek of anguish, she sprung up; everybody awoke; but Mrs. Mouserinks (for she it was who had been in Perlipat's cradle), jumped down, and ran into the corner of the room. The tom-cats went after, but too late; she had escaped through a hole in the floor Perlipat awoke with the noise, and wept aloud. 'Thank heaven,' said the nurses, 'she lives!' But what was their horror, when, on looking at the before beautiful child, they saw the change which had taken place in her! Instead of the lovely white and red cheeks which she had had before, and the shining golden hair, there was now a great deformed head on a little withered body; the blue eyes had changed into a pair of great green gogglers, and the mouth had stretched from ear to ear The queen was almost mad with grief and vexation, and the walls of the king's study were obliged to be wadded, because he was always dashing his head against them for sorrow, and crying out, 'O luckless monarch!' He might have seen how that it would have been better to have eaten the sausage without bacon, and to have allowed Mrs. Mouserinks quietly to stay underground. Upon this subject, however, Perlipat's royal father did not think at all, but he laid all the blame on the court watch maker, Christian Elias Drosselmeier, of Nuremberg. He therefore issued this wise order, that Drosselmeier, should before four weeks restore the princess to her former state, or at least find out a certain and infallible means for so doing; or, in failure thereof, should suffer a shameful death under the axe of the executioner.

Drosselmeier was terribly frightened; but, trusting to his learning and good fortune, he immediately performed the first operation which seemed necessary to him. He carefully took princess Perlipat to pieces, took off her hands and feet, and thus was able to see the inward structure; but there, alas! he found that the princess would grow uglier as she grew older, and he had no remedy for it. He put the princess neatly together again, and sunk down in despair at her cradle; which he never was permitted to leave.

The fourth week had begun,—yes, it was Wednesday! when the king, with eyes flashing with indignation, entered the room of the princess; and, waving his sceptre, he cried out, 'Christian Elias Drosselmeier, cure the princess, or die!' Drosselmeier began to cry bitterly, but little princess Perlipat went on cracking her nuts. Then first was the court watch maker struck with the princess's extraordinary partiality for nuts, and the circumstance of her having come into the world with teeth. In fact, she had cried incessantly since her metamorphosis, until some one by chance gave her a nut; she immediately cracked it, ate the kernel, and was quiet.

From that time the nurses found nothing so effectual as to bring her nuts. 'O holy instinct of natural, eternal and unchangeable sympathy of all beings, thou shewest me the door to the secret. I will knock, and thou wilt open it' He then asked permission to speak to the court astronomer, and was led out to him under a strong guard. These two gentlemen embraced with many tears, for they were great friends; they then entered into a secret cabinet, where they looked over a great number of books which treated of instincts, sympathies, and antipathies, and other deep subjects. The night came; the court astronomer looked to the stars, and made the horoscope of the princess, with the assistance of Drosselmeier, who was also very clever in this science. It was a troublesome business, for the lines were always wandering this way and that; at last, however, what

was their joy to find that the princess Perlipat, in order to be freed from the enchantment which made her so ugly, and to become beautiful again, had only to eat the sweet kernel of the nut Krakatuk.

Now the nut Krakatuk had such a hard shell that an eight-and-forty-pound cannon could drive over without breaking it. But this nut was only to be cracked by a man who had never shaved, and never worn boots; he was to break it in the princess's presence, and then to present the kernel to her with his eyes shut; nor was he to open his eyes until he had walked seven steps backwards without stumbling. Drosselmeier and the astronomer worked without stopping three days and three nights; and, as the king was at dinner on Saturday, Drosselmeier, (who was to have had his head off Sunday morning early), rushed into the room, and declared he had found the means of restoring the princess Perlipat to her former beauty. The king embraced him with fervent affection, promised him a diamond sword, four orders, and two new coats for Sundays. 'We will go to work immediately after dinner,' said the king in the most friendly manner, 'and thou, dear watch maker, must see that the young unshaven gentleman in shoes be ready with the nut Krakatuk. Take care, too, that he drink no wine before, that he may not stumble as he walks his seven steps backwards like a crab; afterwards he may get as tipsy as he pleases.' Drosselmeier was very much frightened at this speech of the king's; and it was not without fear and trembling that he stammered out that it was true that the means were known, but that both the nut Krakatuk, and the young man to crack it, were yet to be sought for; so that it was not impossible that nut and cracker would never be found at all. In tremendous fury the king swung his sceptre over his crowned head, and cried, with a lion's voice, 'Then you must be beheaded, as I said before.'

It was a lucky thing for the anxious and unfortunate Drosselmeier that the king had found his dinner very good

that day, and so was in a disposition to listen to any reasonable suggestions, which the magnanimous queen, who deplored Drosselmeier's fate, did not fail to bring forward. Drosselmeier took courage to plead that, as he had found out the remedy and the means whereby the princess might be cured, he was entitled to his life. The king said this was all stupid nonsense; but, after he had drunk a glass of cherry-brandy, concluded that both the watch maker and the astronomer should immediately set off on their journey, and never return, except with the nut Krakatuk in their pocket. The man who was to crack the same was, at the queen's suggestion, to be advertised for in all the newspapers, in the country and out of it.

Drosselmeier and the court astronomer had been fifteen years on their journey without finding any traces of the nut Krakatuk. The countries in which they were, and the wonderful sights they saw, would take me a month at least to tell of. This, however, I shall not do: all I shall say is, that at last the miserable Drosselmeier felt an irresistible longing to see his native town Nuremberg. This longing came upon him most particularly as he and his friend were sitting together smoking a pipe in the middle of a wood; in Asia. 'O Nuremberg, delightful city! Who's not seen thee, him I pity! All that beautiful is, in London, Petersburg, or Paris, are nothing when compared to thee! Nuremberg, my own city!' As Drosselmeier deplored his fate in this melancholy manner, the astronomer, struck with pity for his friend, began to howl so loudly that it was heard all over Asia. But at last he stopped crying, wiped his eyes, and said, 'Why do we sit here and howl, my worthy colleague? Why don't we set off at once for Nuremberg? Is it not perfectly the same where and how we seek this horrid nut Krakatuk?' 'You are right,' said Drosselmeier; so they both got up, emptied their pipes, and walked from the wood in the middle of Asia to Nuremberg at a stretch.

As soon as they had arrived in Nuremberg, Drosselmeier

hastened to the house of a cousin of his, called Christopher Zachariah Drosselmeier, who was a carver and gilder, and whom he had not seen for a long, long time. To him the watch maker related the whole history of Princess Perlipat, of Mrs. Mouserinks, and the nut Krakatuk; so that Christopher Zachariah clapped his hands for wonder, and said, 'O, cousin, cousin, what extraordinary stories are these!' Drosselmeier then told his cousin of the adventures which befel him on his travels: how he had visited the grand duke of Almonds, and the king of Walnuts; how he had inquired of the Horticultural Society of Acornshausen; in short, how he had sought everywhere, but in vain, to find some traces of the nut Krakatuk. During this recital Christopher Zachariah had been snapping his fingers, and opening his eyes, calling out, hum! and ha! and oh! and ah! At last, he threw his cap and wig up to the ceiling, embraced his cousin, and said, 'Cousin, I'm very much mistaken, *very* much mistaken, I say, if I don't myself possess this nut Krakatuk!' He then fetched a little box, out of which he took a gilded nut, of a middling size. 'Now,' said he, as he showed his cousin the nut, 'the history of this nut is this: Several years ago, a man came here on Christmas-Eve with a sackful of nuts, which he offered to sell cheap. He put the sack just before my booth, to guard it against the nut-sellers of the town, who could not bear that a foreigner should sell nuts in their native city. At that moment a heavy waggon passed over his sack, and cracked every nut in it except one, which the man, laughing in an extraordinary way, offered to sell me for a silver half-crown of the year 1720. This seemed odd to me. I found just such a half-crown in my pocket, bought the nut, and gilded it, not knowing myself why I bought it so dear and valued it so much.' Every doubt with respect to its being the nut which they sought was removed by the astronomer, who, after removing the gilding, found written on the shell, in Chinese characters, the word Krakatuk.

"The joy of the travellers was excessive, and Drossel-

meier's cousin, the gilder, the happiest man under the sun, on being promised a handsome pension and the gilding of all the gold in the treasury into the bargain. The two gentlemen, the watch maker and the astronomer, had put on their night caps and were going to bed, when the latter (that is, the astronomer) said, 'My worthy friend and colleague, you know one piece of luck follows another, and I believe that we have not only found the nut Krakatuk, but also the young man who shall crack it, and present the kernel of beauty to the princess; this person I conceive to be the son of your cousin!' 'Yes,' continued he, 'I am determined not to sleep until I have cast the youth's horoscope.' With these words he took his night cap from his head, and instantly commenced his observations. In fact, the gilder's son was a handsome well-grown lad, who had never shaved, and never worn boots.

At Christmas he used to wear an elegant red coat embroidered with gold; a sword, and a hat under his arm, besides having his hair beautifully powdered and curled. In this way he used to stand before his father's booth, and with a gallantry which was born with him, crack the nuts for the young ladies, who, from this peculiar quality of his, had already called him 'Nutcrackerkin.'

Next morning the astronomer fell delighted on the neck of the watch maker, and cried, 'We have him,—he is found! but there are two things, of which, my dear friend and colleague, we must take particular care: first, we must strengthen the under-jaw of your excellent nephew with a tough piece of wood, and then, on returning home, we must carefully conceal having brought with us the young man who is to bite the nut; for I read by the horoscope that the king, after several people have broken their teeth in vainly attempting to crack the nut, will promise to him who shall crack it, and restore the princess to her former beauty,—will promise, I say, to this man the princess for a wife, and his kingdom after his death.' Of course the carver and gilder was

delighted with the idea of his son marrying the Princess Perlipat and becoming a prince and king; and delivered him over to the two deputies. The wooden jaw which Drosselmeier had fixed in his young and hopeful nephew answered to admiration, so that in cracking the hardest peach-stones he came off with distinguished success.

As soon as Drosselmeier and his comrade had made known the discovery of the nut, the requisite advertisements were immediately issued; and as the travellers had returned with the means of restoring the princess's beauty, many hundred young men, among whom several princes might be found, trusting to the soundness of their teeth, attempted to remove the enchantment of the princess. The ambassadors were not a little frightened when they saw the princess again. The little body with the wee hands and feet could scarcely support the immense deformed head! The hideousness of the countenance was increased by a woolly beard, which spread over mouth and chin. Everything happened as the astronomer had foretold. One dandy in shoes after another broke teeth and jaws upon the nut Krakatuk, without in the slightest degree helping the princess, and as they were carried away half-dead to the dentist (who was always ready), groaned out—that was a hard nut!

When now the king in the anguish of his heart had promised his daughter and kingdom to the man who would break the enchantment, the gentle Drosselmeier made himself known, and begged to be allowed the trial. No one had pleased the princess so much as this young man; she laid her little hand on her heart, and sighed inwardly, Ah! if *he* were the person destined to crack Krakatuk, and be my husband! Young Drosselmeier, approaching the queen, the king, and the princess Perlipat in the most elegant manner, received from the hands of the chief master of ceremonies the nut Krakatuk, which he immediately put into his mouth,—and crack! crack!—broke the shell in a dozen pieces; he neatly removed the bits of shell which yet

remained on the kernel, and then with a most profound bow presented it to the princess, shut his eyes, and proceeded to step backwards. The princess swallowed the kernel; and oh! wonderful wonder! her ugliness disappeared, and, instead, was seen a form of angel beauty, with a countenance like lilies and roses mixed, the eyes of glancing azure, and the full locks curling like threads of gold. Drums and trumpets mingled with the rejoicings of the people. The king and the whole court danced upon one leg, as before, at Perlipat's birth, and the queen was obliged to be sprinkled all over with eau de Cologne, since she had fainted with excessive joy. This great tumult did not a little disturb young Drosselmeier, who had yet his seven steps to accomplish: however, he recollected himself, and had just put his right foot back for the seventh step, when Mrs. Mouserinks, squeaking in a most hideous manner, raised herself from the floor, so that Drosselmeier, as he put his foot backwards, trod on her, and stumbled,—nay, almost fell down. What a misfortune! The young man became at that moment just as ugly as ever was the princess Perlipat. The body was squeezed together, and could scarcely support the thick deformed head, with the great goggling eyes and wide gaping mouth. Instead of the wooden roof for his mouth, a little wooden mantel hung out from behind his back. The watch maker and astronomer were beside themselves with horror and astonishment; but they saw how Mrs. Mouserinks was creeping along the floor all bloody. Her wickedness, however, was not unavenged, for Drosselmeier had struck her so hard on the neck with the sharp heel of his shoe, that she was at the point of death; but just as she was in her last agonies, she squeaked out in the most piteous manner, 'O Krakatuk, from thee I die! but Nutcracker dies as well as I; and thou, my son, with the seven crowns, revenge thy mother's horrid wounds! Kill the man who did attack her, that naughty, ugly wicked Nutcracker!' Quick with this cry died Mrs. Mouserinks, and was carried off by the royal housemaid. Nobody had

taken the least notice of young Drosselmeier. The princess, however, reminded the king of his promise, and he immediately ordered the young hero to be brought before him. But when that unhappy young man appeared in his deformed state, the princess put her hands before her and cried out, 'Away with that nasty Nutcracker!' So the court-marshal took him by his little shoulder and pushed him out of the door.

The king was in a terrible fury that anybody should ever think of making a nutcracker his son-in-law: he laid all the blame on the watch maker and astronomer, and banished them both from his court and kingdom. This had not been seen by the astronomer in casting his horoscope; however, he found, on reading the stars a second time, that young Drosselmeier would so well behave himself in his new station, that, in spite of his ugliness, he would become prince and king. In the meantime, but with the fervent hope of soon seeing the end of these things, Drosselmeier remains as ugly as ever; so much so, that the nutcrackers in Nuremberg have always been made after the exact model of his countenance and figure.

FRIEDRICH HEINRICH KARL, BARON DE LA MOTTE FOUQUÉ

(1777–1843)

***

I

HEADMASTER RHENFRIED AND HIS FAMILY

(Translated by THOMAS ROSCOE)

"SHUT the door, Margery, my dear," said her old grandfather, "and bolt it too very carefully. Our young gentlemen students are about to jubilate in the streets to-night, as neighbour Schwertfeger informs me, and it may be better for quiet people who occupy the ground floor, like us, to be something upon our guard. Meanwhile, I will look to the window shutters; it is already getting quite dark, and it is high time to light a candle."

"But how will our old lodger find his way in, then, Grandfather?" said the little maiden; "you know he is still out among the pine trees, and wandering about the old heathen monuments and tombs."

"Let him rummage there as long as he pleases, child, we cannot hinder him. And he may please, likewise, to wait awhile before the door when he comes; for, to say truth, I do not like his ways at all, and I am sorry that I ever promised the professor, on taking the house, not to turn the strange lodger out of doors."

"Oh, Grandfather! it was surely hard enough upon poor Mr. Professor to be obliged to leave his nice family house, all owing to his wicked creditors; and it vexes me to think of it.

For Mr. Professor always looks so kind and pleasant, and not so old as the other professors; then he can tell so many fine stories of bygone times, which, though they almost make one's hair stand on end, are very pretty to hear. And as to the strange lodger, he is, perhaps, much better in his heart than he sometimes appears to me."

"Maybe so, child; but I wish I had stayed in my own little house. Whenever I go past it I feel a kind of sinking at my heart; it was much pleasanter there."

"Yet I think you used to complain and groan more there, than you do here, Grandfather."

"How can you make that out, Margery? You know I only removed just to please good Mr. Professor. I wish from my heart he had continued to live here instead of us; at all events he would have paid no house rent! Yet he would not listen to the idea for a moment. But now, my dear, let us think of the door. See that it is made quite fast!"

Little Margery did as her grandfather bade her: she turned the key three times in the lock; slipped the bolts as far as they would go, and then both seated themselves, with a feeling of quiet and security, snugly round their little hearth.

"Shall I go on reading where I left off, Grangran?" said the pretty child with a smile. The good-natured old man nodded assent, at the same time taking out of his portfolio, his lead pencil, paper and ruler, at his accustomed hour, in order to draw designs, which he afterwards exhibited for the instruction of the young artisans, as headmaster of the joiners' trade.

For the same reason he kept but little company, living quite retired, attended only by a single maidservant and his little granddaughter.

She had, by this time, seated herself opposite to him, began to turn over the leaves of a huge, richly bound folio in parchment, and proceeded to read as follows:

"And it likewise once happened in the famed city of the

sea, at Venice, that a gondolier, whose occupation there is to row backwards and forwards in boats, hung with black, upon the canals, had taken into his service a stranger, for his rower, of uncommon size and strength. Neither the gondolier nor any one else could learn whence the lusty varlet had last come, nor where was his native place. Some there were, more deeply read, who, observing that this huge hireling was deprived of the use of speech, though he could drink well and hail passengers politely enough, imagined that he must be some great animal metamorphosed through the wondrous power of some sorcerer into the human shape; and that, from his strength and docility, he was most likely formed out of an elephant.

"Be that, however, as it may, the gondolier was well satisfied with his journeyman, who, if he devoured a good deal of food, also went through as much labour; and he troubled his head very little with inquiring into his descent and country, leaving all such conjectures to the solution of the learned.

"In this proceeding, however, he could not be justified, as no Christian master and householder ought to engage any servants, whose faith, good character, and conduct are not sufficiently known to him, since he must remain accountable both to God and man for the demeanour of such domestics, or other hired persons."

Here the old man sighed deeply, and leaned down his head, white with age, upon his hand. Margery stopped and looked at him with surprise. He then recovered himself, and forcing a smile observed, "Well, my love, read on; I want nothing. I was only thinking how much better it had been, if—— But go on, Margery, my dear." And Margery thus proceeded:

"About the same period there happened to pass that way a famous necromancer, who applied to the said gondolier for three able-bodied boatmen, in order to make a long and quick passage by night. The gondolier thought he was

rendering him a great service by letting him have his dumb rower for one of the hands, which he calculated at the rate of five others. This he seemed to show by the speed with which his gondola began to skim the waves. But just at midnight there was heard, from the vicinity of the route it was then going, a most hideous uproar, in which the voice of the great sorcerer was most loud, and resounded far over the waters. A few of the boldest young men hastened with torches and arms towards the spot. Soon they saw the form of the huge rower conspicuous on the deck, engaged in sinking his own vessel and stamping it deeper and deeper into the waves below; at the same time he seemed to be playing at ball with the sorcerer, and at a single blow struck off his head, after which boat and boatman both sunk together into the deep.

"On the following morning the shattered limbs of the necromancer were found scattered in different places, washed up by the waves. What appeared still more remarkable was the discovery of a dead elephant, lying, apparently drowned, upon the sea shore, a few miles distant from the city. But whence the strange monster could have been brought, or by what means, no one knew.

"It was surmised, however, by many, that the same necromancer had, by his infernal art, metamorphosed the huge animal into the human form, and employed it in this way, at Venice, for the purpose of effecting some of his diabolical schemes. That at this time he must for once have miscalculated the exact hour and planet under which he was operating; and had unluckily, for himself, been deceived by the evil spirits, with whom he was tampering, so that in ascending the gondola he did not even recognise the enchanted beast, as oftentimes, indeed, happens to such practitioners in the black arts before attaining their end. Others again wished to infer that the magician had only assumed the strange, ancient-looking form in which he appeared, and was in reality a very handsome young man,

deeply smitten with a passion for the lovely consort of the Doge. That moreover he had sent the huge elephantine rower before him, in order to assist in the abduction of the noble duchess, or at all events to stir up some wild insurrection in the city, and in the state council of the Republic, favourable to his views. As it has been stated, however, he, in this instance, fell a victim to his own want of foresight in directing the potency of his own fatal arts.

"Hence we may learn. . . ."

Just at these words Margery was interrupted by a tremendous bustle in the street. She cast an anxious glance towards the windows, and at length whispered, "Ah, Grandfather; I fear the young gentlemen students are even more wild than usual to-day!"

"It is only according to custom," said the old man with a smile; "and birds of one feather will flock together, as the saying goes. So give no more heed to it, love, than to the blustering of a storm towards spring, and go on quietly with the book."

Margery was once more applying herself with all diligence to the exact line and word, when suddenly there came three such thundering blows against the window shutters that the fine old vellum book slipped out of her hand, and she hid her face in the cushion of the armchair, which rattled, along with all the furniture in the room.

But not so the worthy headmaster; for hastening close under the window, he exclaimed in the same strong clear tone in which he gave the word of command, when serving *à la militaire* in his youth, "Who has the boldness to disturb a free citizen in his own house? Let the wanton young blade give his name from the outside, and we shall soon see if he be as valiant as he would make us believe. As to this house, let him know it is the residence of Headmaster Rhenfried—Philibert Rhenfried, President of the Honourable Joiners' Company, belonging to this town and country. What say ye?"

A low, anxious wailing was heard on the outside, very strongly distinguished through all the violent mirth and uproar of the collegians, and gradually dying away along with the same in the distance.

"What was that?" inquired both the grandfather and the child at the same moment, with a look of surprise.

The students meanwhile made a fresh movement, and formed in a grand square in the mark. Torches were seen waving in the air, mingled with no few cudgels; and it is said that a number were observed to be sharpening their hangers upon the stones. Apparently they had pronounced their *pereat* upon many an unlucky professor's pate; and in particular upon his who had so greatly won little Margery's regard. For though he was accustomed to banter in a friendly way with some of these wild spirits of the gown, he was extremely bitter and unrelenting in cases of excessive wickedness and extravagance on their part, inasmuch that between the two they hardly knew in which way to deal with him. However, they were in hopes, at least, of terrifying him out of the vexatious censorship which he had assumed, and they were the more emboldened by the efforts of a new collegian, named Marcellin, who had been residing during some weeks, while on a tour, in the town, and ingratiated himself extremely with the whole fraternity by his superior courage and dexterity. Though a good deal older than the usual run of them, he it was who schemed and executed the most mad and juvenile tricks, while at the same time he won equal admiration by his superior abilities and acquirements. He had also conceived a great dislike to poor Margery's favourite, the Professor Nordenholm; hated to hear him named; could never be prevailed upon to call on him as on the other professors, and felt infinitely delighted at the idea of beholding the rod which was now hanging over him, descend, *in terrorem*, upon his professional shoulders.

Their whole force marched forthwith until they formed a

junction before the said Nordenholm's house; and there they set up a shout for Marcellin. "Marcellin!" echoed from a hundred voices, but it was in vain! no Marcellin made his appearance.

At length he was seen sinking quite pale and breathless, with difficulty supporting himself upon his sword-stick, out of the crowd about him. Some of the senior natives approached him with looks of eager and terrific inquiry, while the light of their torches glared strangely upon his livid and distorted features. "What!" cried he scornfully, as they gathered round him, "do you think this either well-bred or right to dog me in so scandalous a style to the very steps of a strange old master joiner, one whom I may not so much as call by name; and would you delude me by maintaining that this is the family house of the hated Professor Nordenholm?"

"Of a truth," replied one of the students, in no good-humoured tone, "the headmaster resides in Nordenholm's family house, but who, as you so outrageously insist, has offered to dog your steps thither? And, moreover, how happen you to know anything respecting Nordenholm's residence? you who detested to hear him named, and gave yourself no sort of concern about him! All this appears to me somewhat strange."

Marcellin's pride took the alarm, but at the word strange he seemed greatly confused, and replied in a hurried, unconnected manner. This only plunged both parties deeper into the brawl, and shortly, in his excessive choler, he challenged two of the natives to meet him with sword and pistols on the ensuing morning.

After fierce words on both sides, they separated and went in different directions without attempting to resume any of their former schemes, and without a single *pereat* executed on any professional head.

Nordenholm watched their retreat through his half-closed windows barricaded with huge tomes, and burst into bitter

laughter, as he recalled to mind a similar convulsion, which was years before followed by the loss of his sweetest earthly enjoyments.

Meanwhile the headmaster and Margery had ceased to read, and were sitting nearer each other quite still and contemplative.

"No, read no more to-night, child," said the old man, "the evening seems to have set in so strangely; and then the history you began to read was so very extraordinary, who knows but still more wild and absurd accounts may follow it? Better bring your spinning-wheel to the table, and then, if you should happen to call to mind one of your prettiest ditties, sing it for me, my dear."

Margery smiled and nodded her head, at the same time beginning to spin in right earnest, but no pretty song seemed to rise up in her trembling little heart. She seemed rather to anticipate from her looks, though the streets were again quiet, that there was yet something strangely unusual and dismal in the approaching night that weighed heavier and heavier on her mind. Nor were her forebodings felt without reason, for just then they heard heavy footsteps pacing backwards and forwards in the room above them, the same which was occupied by the old lodger, who had not yet returned home, and of which he always carried the key about him, being extremely jealous of any one entering it in his absence. At times, too, they thought they heard a fearful sobbing and sighing, almost like that of a man dying of great pain. Margery raised up her hands, as if directing her grandfather to the spot, but said not a word, while he went and took down his old broad sword hanging on the wall, then prayed a few moments within himself, and lastly went towards the door

"Dearest Grandfather, my own best Grandpapa," whispered Margery, "take me with you, then; for whatever terrible there may be, it cannot be half so agonising as I should imagine were I to be left here in the little study by

myself—all alone, with such dreadful thoughts. Oh yes; you must take me along with you!"

And after a few moments, while the old man had been engaged in trimming the lamp for his lanthorn, and putting out the candle which they were before burning, he motioned to the timid girl to accompany him, and lighted her on the way. But she clung fast to him, and they began to ascend the stairs together. As they proceeded up the narrow stone steps, and along the creaking landing, they continued to hear more plainly the same strange moaning and whimpering from the lodger's chamber. They were now standing before the door, and could perceive there was a light burning within, apparent through the keyhole. "In God's name," cried old master Rhenfried, "what kind of being is within there, and in what manner engaged?"

The door flew suddenly open, wide open, and "Huzzah! halloh! who disturbs, who affrights me?" was repeated from a voice within, so horribly wild and mad that Master Rhenfried involuntarily stepped back, and the child fell upon her knees, muttering her prayers behind him.

In the middle of the chamber stood, arrayed in a blood-red mantle, the strange lodger, and he trembled greatly. After a short pause, he said in a low hollow voice, "See! take your rent for one half year. It is upon the table; there, take it away, for it fell due the week before."

"I shall not receive it to-day for all that," replied the old master, with a firmly recovered and determined tone of voice, "but I both will and must know what it is that so dreadfully agitates you, and by what means you gained access into my fast-locked and bolted dwelling!"

"What I moan, and what I sigh for," half sobbed and laughed the offended lodger. "Eh! surely the spirits that haunt the gallows have a right to do that; and why not he who regularly and orderly pays for his own lodging? How did I gain access here, you say? Eh! what kind of questions are these? Why, the house door was standing wide

open when I came; upon my honour. I can assure you, nevertheless, that I remarked nothing else."

"For all-that," said Master Rhenfried, "I have earnestly to entreat of you to leave these lodgings to-morrow morning; for truly I am not accustomed to live with people whose doors fly off their hinges when they just approach them; I will never live with them any more."

"But I do not happen to be of the same opinion," said the strange lodger, in a contemptuous tone. "I laugh at the idea of going out; you know you are bound over to the former landlord to suffer me to remain. So there is your rent, pick it up, it is all there."

The old master, glancing sideways at the glittering gold, observed, "Hand to hand; I can receive nothing from you besides; I see you have brought such curious old doubloons, all marked Venice, and I know not what date they may bear. I believe, too, I have said before-time that I am no exchange broker, and have no dealings in strange, obsolete coins, though I were to gain ten times the amount by them."

"Here, however," cried the lodger, laughing, "are no Venetian doubloons. They are old Saxon gold coins, which your forefathers have been acquainted with these thousand years. And if you sottish folk no longer prize them, yet the former master here, the wonderfully wise Nordenholm, may surely contrive to exchange them. Now pray leave me alone, or take what is due to you!"

And as old Master Rhenfried was turning reluctantly away, the strange lodger slammed to the door with such violence as to blow out their light. Slowly and sad did the grandfather and daughter descend the stairs, and along the landing, which sounded dismally to their footsteps, until they again reached the snug little study, and felt as if a burden were suddenly removed from their mind. They lighted and trimmed their lamp, and Master Rhenfried shouted aloud for the maidservant, to go instantly with a message for Professor Nordenholm, entreating him to come thither

without loss of time. Should he be gone to rest, he must nevertheless get up, and hasten as fast as possible to consider of some very important business.

In a short while the Professor made his appearance, pale and terrified. "You have sent for me on account of the lodger—is it not?" he inquired in a low voice. "My God! I might well think how it would be! But let our pretty little Margery go to bed. I have much strange matter for your private ear, and our conference may be prolonged far beyond midnight."

The headmaster expressed his assent, and bade the servant go along with Margery, and both retire to rest. Margery looked a little anxiously round her, but observing that her good old grandfather, as well as the Professor, was going to keep watch, she thought it would be better to try and forget her fears in sleep, and, without a word, she bade them both a sweet good-night. Soon she fell into a soft slumber, and lost all recollection of the fearful occurrences of that dismal night: it had no longer power over her gentle spirit, for the smile that played upon her lips betokened innocent and angelic rest.

Meanwhile the Professor and Master Rhenfried were in earnest communion together, seated near one another at the little round table. After a long pause, the former, in a low, and fearful tone, thus resumed the discourse: "I ought in the outset, my dear Rhenfried, to remind you of a great calamity which happened to you, though I am also aware that so singular a period of your excellent life should, if possible, be wrapped in an impenetrable veil of oblivion; but it is all of no use now. I loved your lost daughter who disappeared ten years ago, and if she did not return my affection, there was a time when she seemed to receive it with a degree of sweet complacency and friendship. The cause of the beloved girl's loss, so inexpressibly bitter to my feelings, remains still as unaccountable to me as I suppose it yet does to you."

The old man made a sign for him to say no more, and seemed to be absorbed in deep meditation within himself. At length he said, "No! that dreadful occurrence is not such a complete mystery as you seem to think, though more severely felt, my dear sir, than any similar affliction that perhaps ever befell me. Yet, when I take all into consideration—your known integrity; your present sincerity; your kind attachment to my granddaughter, and the confidence she seems to feel in you—I feel I can no longer withhold mine; I feel that you fully merit it, and I will state every circumstance I know relating to the fate of my poor unfortunate girl.

"It may now be rather more than twelve years ago when there came to my house, where till then I had resided so quietly and pleasantly with my little girls—there came, I say, one day, a handsome young man who expressed a wish to see my workshop, and after examining my models, etc., very attentively, he began to talk about an apprenticeship. As you may imagine, I at first treated the matter as mere jest, and then rejected it as a piece of uncalled-for mockery on his part, warmly entreating him not to think of amusing himself at my expense. Still the young gentleman insisted he intended neither jest nor insult; he was much attached to turning and joiners' work of all kinds, and he had resolved to become acquainted with it in all its branches thoroughly, and upon principle, under the care and instructions of a skilful master. He then hoped he had succeeded, and he was resolved, with my permission, never to relinquish his design until he had made himself fairly master of all that it was in my power to teach. Like a madman, as I was, I gave my consent, though I knew literally nothing either who he was or whence he came: not even whether he had any testimonials with him. I showed him everything in my shop, drew up an agreement, as if the devil possessed me, and called him, at his own request, by the name of Ludibert Wendelstern."

"Ludibert!" said Nordenholm mournfully. "Alas, there is a Ludibert occurs, likewise, in my own history. But go on, go on, dear master. Was he, then, the man who deprived you of your angelic daughter?"

"He! he! No other on earth!" replied the old man, his face growing darker and darker as he spoke. "Right well did the cunning seducer know how to apply himself to my noble art; never had I an apprentice half so skilful, for he possessed fine talents, and in more branches than one. He could play the flute beautifully, and could sing as well; while with his rapier he was a perfect master."

Nordenholm earnestly signified his assent, and the old man continued, without noticing it.

"During our leisure hours he amused himself with instructing the rest of the apprentices and their companions in the noble science of defence, and having myself been a soldier, fond of the sword exercise, it afforded me no slight pleasure to witness their feats with the foil. On all occasions the young master exhibited the greatest politeness and good breeding in his conduct, and daily established himself more firmly in my good graces. This continued for the space of two years; when suddenly the scales fell from my deluded eyes, and I stood lost in astonishment and dismay. The young students had engaged in a similar piece of work to that we have witnessed this evening; and one of those who returned no more that night to supper, and was never afterwards seen, was Ludibert Wendelstern. On the ensuing morning I found a paper lying in my daughter Agnes' chamber, but she was gone—gone for ever."

The old man here rose, and unlocking a small cupboard, took out two letters, which he handed to the Professor, who, recognising the hand of his beloved Agnes, began to read, though almost blinded by the tears that came into his eyes.

"A happy destiny calls me away from you, my dear father; but I know you would never have yielded me your consent. Farewell, then, and take comfort; for I feel quite

assured we shall soon meet again, when you will congratulate me a thousand, thousand times on the happiness which will soon be mine."

"That," said the old master, "was indeed a poor prophecy," and he drew his hand across his eyes, as if in pain. "She was far too confident, and that ever brings failure and disappointment along with it, for wretched mortals such as we are. There is only one thing certain, but that is quite certain; wherefore the Lord be praised."

He took his cap from his reverend white head, held it between his folded hands, and prayed within himself. Afterwards he continued, with more cheerful resignation: "During four years I could learn nothing regarding her; but at the expiration of that period, one fine morning, an infant of about four years old was found wrapped delicately up, and laid at my door. It was Margery, and the following note was found attached to its arm; which I will endeavour to read to you:

"'I have been lawfully united at the altar with my beloved Ludibert; and the sweet pledge of our affection, which I herewith commit to your care, was, I assure you by all that is holy, born in honourable wedlock. If you would not wish to curse and to kill me, I beseech you to preserve the dear infant for me until I come to claim her; till when her existence must remain a mystery. My noble consort maintains me in great wealth and splendour; yet, oh, best and dearest father, you cannot believe what abundance of wishful tears I shed—what sighs I pour, once more to cross our sweet home's threshold; and which I am fondly trusting soon to do. Oh, think often of your absent, but faithful, fondly-loving

"'AGNES.'"

"In the basket that contained the child was a large sum of gold and silver, with precious stones. This, however, I deposited as the subscription of some stranger for the use of

St. Ursula's hospital. But I deliberated not a moment in announcing that the young child was my granddaughter, the offspring of the marriage of my daughter with the stranger. And now, God be praised, our good city is pleased to give full credit to any assertion from the lips of headmaster Philibert Rhenfried. So far my good name helped me, and I troubled myself no farther with any needless inquiries. So, at all events, my poor Agnes has not been the occasion of adding the sin of lying to the account of her aged father's soul. I have brought up her little girl to the best of my knowledge of what is good and right, and so by Heaven's mercy she has gone on improving, doubtless under its wise dispensations, to the fulfilment of God's purposes here below."

Nordenholm here pressed the old man's hand, and, leaning down his head, wept bitterly. After a long sad pause he then said: "Alas, my good master, I see how much you suffer, but your sufferings are not barbed with the stings of guilt; therefore do you bear them freely and boldly. But woe, alas! I feel no sweet confidence in the same freedom. I have my misgivings, though I have nothing dreadful to reproach myself with. There is something weighs at my heart, which seems to grow heavier and heavier as the night proceeds.

"The cause of this first arose on occasion of the forementioned festival, when I was young and happy—alas! doubly happy—for I then flattered myself with delightful hopes of winning your daughter's love; and came along with other students to enjoy ourselves here.

"After our rounds we held jubilee in a grand decorated hall, where we were joined by a mask arrayed in very splendid apparel. We had once, and only once, before observed the same man make his appearance, and concluded that he was one of our merry company who had some especial piece of mirth in view. This time the unknown made his obeisance, and with very humble voice

petitioned for leave to propose a question for the consideration of our society. Receiving our unanimous consent, he began: 'It is a question of honour and of duty—whether a lover have a right to carry off his beloved when he is persuaded that he can maintain her in all due and lawful honour and worthiness, and is equally persuaded that her happiness and his own can be accomplished by no other means.' He paused, and the voices on both sides rose loud on the ear; though most were perceptibly in favour of a mad assent to such a proposition, many of the students being pretty well heated with wine, and full of adventurous spirit, eager for exploits. I, even I, good master, joined in the wild and wicked votes that carried the question; but it was the first truly blameable act of my life. Even now, within this last half hour, I have heard from your own lips how very lamentably I may have assisted, by such a vote, by supporting such a proposal, in striking at my own sweetest hopes of happiness on earth."

He hid his face in his hands, and was silent. The old master laid his hand gently upon his bowed head, and while he pronounced his forgiveness, also gave his blessing. his repentance was enough. Nordenholm then rose with renewed hope and strength, and thus continued:

"It seemed, at the same moment, as if I was carried away by a strange impulse of wilful rioting and folly, quite foreign to my usual calm and moderate feelings of enjoyment on such occasions. It appeared as if I no longer recognised myself; I wished to be foremost in the mad career we were pursuing, everywhere ambitious to give a spur to the follies of the hour, and in all companies striving to lead the revels, in singing, dancing, drinking or rioting. Shortly I heard reports that the stranger was exerting himself very strenuously among our colleagues to obtain some of the most bold and adventurous hands for the purpose of carrying into effect the identical exploit which had gained our unanimous applause; and that he spared no powers of oratory, no

influence, to gain his point. My rude and boisterous mirth seemed to offend his more genteel and delicate bearing, and soon we had words together. Then he tore the mask from his face, and we beheld a perfectly strange, but beautiful youth, with a smile of scorn upon his features, which could not, however, impair their noble symmetry and lively expression. 'My name is Ludibert,' he cried, approaching me nearer. 'For that of my family, it is noble, princely; but I shall not mention it to you. Enough that I now cite you to appear and decide our difference in honourable combat: enough that I so far condescend.'

"The challenge was as quickly received; everything was prepared. I met him with perfect ease and confidence; for I was the unrivalled master of our ring, and stripped to our shirts, with single rapiers, we set to. Almost at the first pass I was overpowered by the irresistible vigour of my rival's arm: I could not even stand my guard; but was instantly struck senseless and bleeding to the ground, a part of his weapon sticking in my breast.

"Many weeks afterwards, on my first return of consciousness, my first inquires were respecting Agnes, and the tale of her abduction then saluted my ears. I could learn nothing of the time and place, while my ideas on the subject were so mingled with the occurrences of that dreadful night that I could only feel remorse for the mad disposition which I had indulged, and confess myself unworthy of the happiness which once appeared in store for me.

"Yet alas, good sir, my cup was not yet full. There was a favourite subject, I don't much like to mention, which I once pursued for the sake of poetical embellishment—the research after strange old charms and other magical influences; and this my despair respecting the fate of Agnes now led me to employ, for the purpose of discovering whither the beloved girl had disappeared. Ah, my worthy master, fix not your eye so sternly, so reproachfully upon me, much less turn away your sympathy from my sorrows; for know,

God be praised, I have never either denied or misapplied what is holy by any instigation or pursuit of mine." At the same time he stretched out his right hand in token of such assurance, which the good master, with a look of compassion accepted and motioned to him to proceed; as he did in the following words:

"I knew that it has been conceived possible, through a fit conjunction of times and circumstances, so to fabricate a magical mirror that it shall retain the moon's beams in such a manner as to exhibit by secret reflexion on the surface everything that passes upon the earth's sphere in succession, according as such magic mirror shall be directed and applied. This wonderful piece of mechanism I succeeded with infinite labour and great expense in procuring; and once in the garden of this your, but formerly my house, I began, when the moon was shining clear in the heavens, and at the full, about the eleventh hour of night, to try my secret experiment. That my own apparition would be seen, in case my image fell upon my glass—seen even from the farthest corner of the earth—I was well aware; but my whole soul was so intent upon learning the fate and residence of Agnes that I could dwell upon nothing else.

"It now seemed as if some assistant being were directing my hand in the motions of the mirror, which fortunately had been placed aright. At first only small strange forms cast their reflexions over the surface of the mirror; when at length, in the direction of the south, there arose one so enchantingly sweet and lovely before my eyes!—Oh my good master! father! she sat looking so beautiful and angelic, amidst the blooming orange bowers, in the soft moonlight which shed its beams upon the lofty pines that crowned the heights above——"

"I see your eyes sparkle with delight," interrupted the old man, in a tone of displeasure; "you ought rather to take shame and sorrow to yourself for having dared to dabble in any forbidden species of witchcraft, than to display

the least feeling of exultation. Let me hear you describe what follows, with a becoming degree of seriousness and regret. What further appeared?"

With the humility of a repentant offender, the Professor cast his eyes upon the ground, and in a lower tone said, "It was, indeed, Agnes! She was splendidly attired, and was again seen walking by moonlight leaning on Ludibert's arm. I concealed my features cautiously, at a distance, to prevent them from falling upon the mirror. Next, you yourself, sir, suddenly appeared in the garden; and on the mirror's surface the pale and sorrowful cast of your features was plainly visible. Seized with alarm, lest you too should catch sight of Agnes, I ran to the glass, beheld my own distorted features reflected there, and bursting into a thousand fragments, the wonderful instrument fell from my trembling grasp."

"I know it all, as well as if it happened to-day," said the white-headed Rhenfried; "yet amidst all the images that floated before my eyes I could distinguish no one; clouds of heart-sprung tears concealed them from view. For at that time I had not fully resigned myself to the will of God: I lay weeping upon my bed, but suddenly I heard a light whispering as if it had said in my ear, 'Rise, unhappy father; in Nordenholm's house it is known what is become of thy daughter.' I obeyed, and doubtless it was no good spirit which had so whispered me in my chamber. Then when I came and found you labouring under such excessive terror, you know well that I retired without speaking a single word, and never more alluded to the appalling and mysterious subject. Long afterwards, however, a heavy weight seemed to oppress my soul; from which you may learn, my poor deluded friend, how very critical and dangerous a pursuit it is that can involve in its forbidden operations even the peace of the innocent, who would willingly resist its incantations to their last breath."

Meanwhile they again began to hear the voice of the

strange lodger above stairs, mingled with sobs and sighs, and wild fierce laughter, even louder than before.

"Good God!" cried the Professor in much alarm; "suppose the horrid noises were to awaken the child!" Already he had raised his hand with threatening gesture towards the room above; when, instantly checking himself, he sank down upon his knees and said: "Help! help me to pray! good master; that will avail us much better here." Both then prayed, and all grew still!

When they had again seated themselves at the table, the old master first spoke.

"Assuredly, Mr. Professor, you must have disturbed my mind by some other means, besides those used with the magical mirror. You had better at once speak boldly out, and confess how it is that this strange unhappy lodger continues here; he is in some way connected with your proceedings."

"So indeed it is," replied Nordenholm. "For having learned that my Agnes was to be sought for somewhere in the south, I instantly collected the scattered remnants of my fortune, in order to seek her in those parts. The better to further my views, and gain access to various classes of society, I assumed the title of Doctor and Professor. While I was absent you were presented with little Margery, whom you found at your own door, but it was my fate, alas! to encounter many less fair and pleasing sights—cruel and frightful adventures, which bore me, like a whirlpool, into the gulf.

"I had journeyed as far as the city of Venice. There I heard mention of a certain sorcerer, who knew how to unravel all mysteries upon earth, and as I found all my inquiries after my lost Agnes were fruitless, I formed an acquaintance with him; and he is the very same strange being whom we just now heard crying out and lamenting over our head. On consulting him, he declared that he must have some fixed abode, where he might prepare his conjurations, and that, having first provided him with a floor

in my own house, he would attend to my wishes. When he got possession, however, he did not keep his word, pretending that the image of Agnes appeared only dimly floating before his eyes. Moreover, I heard it currently reported at Venice that this was merely the apparition of a real sorcerer, who had flourished centuries ago, and owing to some want of foresight in his art had fallen a sudden victim, and never since been enabled to enjoy the least repose."

"Just Heavens! that I feared," exclaimed Rhenfried. "Margery has this very evening read me his dreadful history aloud! Come what may, however, no time is to be lost; we must rid the house of him, at all events." As he had said this, the old master proceeded once more to trim his lanthorn, took his good sword under his arm, and strode boldly out of the room. Nordenholm ventured not to oppose him, but followed at a distance, trembling with doubt and terror, up the steps and along the sounding staircase until they reached the strange lodger's room.

The grey-headed host knocked smartly at the door, it began to open very slowly, but not as if moved by a human hand, for the fearful guest was seated quite at the other end of the chamber, upon the ground, wrapped in a red mantle; several household implements scattered round him, and a dull blue fire flickering and casting its fitful shadows upon the opposite walls.

The strange lodger cast a keen glance at the intruders, with a smile of scorn upon his lips; and as they continued to gaze upon him, more fierce and fiery glances shot from his hollow eyes.

"Give yourselves no trouble," he shouted in a hollow voice, "I well know your object, and what you want here; but nothing will come of it, at least during your lives; and it is a question even whether Master Philibert's grandchildren will make me quit. For I am of a very tenacious nature, and apt to tarry long at a place."

The Professor here sighed deeply from the bottom of his

soul. The Red Mantle tried to force a laugh, but in this he could not rightly succeed; though he said in triumph, "One of you, I well know, is burdened with heavy thoughts. Of that at least I am certain!"

"For me," replied old Master Philibert, very calmly—"for me, I feel still more certain that I am not the person. Yea! and I know something yet more: that you will not venture to stay in this house another quarter of an hour; for I hereby conjure you, in pure and lively faith, with the fear of God before my eyes, confiding in Him only, to depart from hence out of this house, and never to cross its threshold more. What is more, you shall decamp forthwith, secretly and quietly, without offering to disturb a single Christian soul within these walls, without any knocking, rumbling, or roaring of any kind. Now avaunt!—Are you going, or will you have me appeal to more strong and terrible adjurations, in the name of the Lord? Will you wait, and rue your folly, or be gone?" At these last words, with quick, horrible and threatening gestures, the lodger gathered up his strange furniture and, hiding them under his red mantle, he hastened towards the door, fiercely murmuring as he went by, "Thou cunning old Professor—thou arch deceiver—not a word in my defence, against that savage greybeard; dumb villain as thou art! I will away from these walls—but then what woe—what woe—yet—yet."

His voice continued to utter this, close in their ears, after he himself had disappeared. With the careful eye of a prudent householder and father, Master Rhenfried examined all parts of the room with his lanthorn, in order to ascertain that nothing of an unhallowed or diabolical kind had been left in the haunted room. He could discover nothing, except that upon the little table there remained the same old gold coins, counted out in payment of the strange lodger's rent.

"Hem!" said the master, thinking awhile to himself, "an honest ghost in his way; yet I must not venture to

take possession of it; though, again, it is doubtless a God-send, which ought not to be buried without turning to use nor misapplied; I will convey it then to St. Ursula's Hospital. Morning is already glimmering through the window shutters; I think we will awaken little Margery, and take her along with us, for the child is always eager, and even quite fond of walking that way; none so pleasant, she thinks, when I go along with her."

Very soon, then, the Professor and Master Rhenfried were proceeding on their route, conducting the pretty Margery carefully between them, along the beautiful avenue of lime trees which leads with gentle ascent to the front of the hospital. The little girl laughed and jested in so artless and engaging a manner as to lighten up the sad contemplative features of her companions with occasional smiles. They met one of the women of the establishment, and clasping her little hands, Margery addressed her in the most friendly voice: "Ah, Lady Sibyl! ah, Lady Sibyl! thou that art wont to bring me always such sweet fruit, and get'st nothing but a pat on the cheek in return. Good-morning, a very good-morning, Lady Sibyl."

Just at that moment was heard a confused uproar on the opposite side to where they stood, and a group of students made their appearance carrying a bier, apparently with some wounded person, to seek assistance at the hospital. Lady Sibylla, at this sight, breaking loose from the child, hastened to her post; the two friends followed her thoughtfully, while Margery hid herself anxiously behind a rose bush.

The bier was now laid down, the students gathered round in a circle, while the woman began cautiously to examine the person's wounds. They all made way, however, for the Professor and Master Rhenfried with marks of great respect, and one of them began to whisper them how the strange student, Marcellin, had engaged with and disarmed one of the senior students, and then confessed the injustice of which he had been guilty on the previous evening, upon which

a complete reconciliation took place. "So it might have been, likewise, with the second duel," continued the relater, "or at least nothing fatal would perhaps have happened; when suddenly—no one knew whence—an old, strange-looking man clad in a red mantle stood in the midst of us all, murmuring some unintelligible words, and looking highly displeased at us. The combatants seemed to fight more and more furiously. In a moment the stranger stooping down, filled his hands with sand, which he cast repeatedly with the speed of light in thick clouds between the rivals, at the same time loudly laughing. 'Hail to you, old master! well a day! have I played you a trick? Now for Venice. Now thou hast got it well—woe—woe!'

"We heard him say these words, though he was gone, nobody seemed to know how. Lost in astonishment, we at length turned our eyes to the duellists, who both lay bleeding upon the ground; the senior was dead, and Marcellin we have here brought along with us in the situation you see. Their seconds have made their escape; and we, though less guilty, are come forward willingly to deliver ourselves up to whatever punishment may be thought due. No, we did not leave him helpless upon the ground."

The Professor and Rhenfried, not without evident reluctance and shuddering, drew nigh the bier; pale and bloody, Marcellin raised himself up. He knew Nordenholm; moaned, and then exclaimed in rage, "Thou black sorcerer—abandoned sorcerer—I swore to do it—I saw thy hateful visage when you conjured up the image of my sweet wife's father, all sorrowful and bathed in tears. Then sat she in her orange bower, near Naples—in the soft moonshine—know you it—know you it well? In an agony of remorse she turned away from me, and thenceforth our bonds of love were broken asunder. . . . Nay, I have never since once beheld her anywhere on this wide and desolate earth. Then hastened I hither, to have my revenge on thee; and here I must sadly die. And yet now were all obstacles overcome;

and the sweet saint were again mine—the partner of my ducal power and splendour—she, for whose sake I became a vile apprentice—and God knows what worse—yea, I had led her home—had her mine own in all the pride of love and splendour. . . . But now she is far away, and I am dying—dying, another and another victim of thy hateful infernal arts."

A murmur was heard among the students, "The fever is mounting into his head." Others, however, were more doubtful, and hazarded a variety of conflicting conjectures. Master Rhenfried looked round him with a free and friendly air; he then took his cap off his fine grey head, and spoke in a clear but mild tone, "To the very respectable young students, and any other spectators who may wish to put questions on this affair, I here stake my life and honour, that Professor Nordenholm is wholly innocent of causing this young man's death."

The murmurs became still, all moved respectfully in token of assent to the worthy old man, and they began to advance excuses, and canvass the Professor's conduct in a more favourable manner. He himself, however, appeared unconscious of what was passing around him; he stood, the very picture of grief, the hot bitter tears coursing each other down his cheeks.

Master Rhenfried meanwhile bent over the dying man, and with gentle firmness said, "You will soon appear in the presence of the great God, my dear sir, and now you see before you the face of that man whom you have the most deeply betrayed and injured, even deprived of his last sweetest hopes on earth. But God be praised—I know, I confess, Him who purchased us with His blood, bore all our sins, and has paid the price even for yours. So take comfort, dear sir, I forgive you from the bottom of my soul, and if you depart with feelings of reconciliation and regret, be assured you will likewise meet with still greater compassion—pardon—blessed peace, in that better state to which you are now

fast hastening. With whatever evil, deceit, and falsehood, Ludibert, you so vilely assumed the name of Wendelstern on earth, I do confidently predict that for this your sorrow and ruth you shall yet retain your name, and become a fair bright star (stern) in Heaven, high above all your earthly pomp and state, in a sphere where friend and enemy may unite in the enjoyment of the same heavenly blessedness and delights. Go, take thy rest then, dear Ludibert, with a meek and reconciled spirit, in holy hope, in lively assurance, that thou shalt wake 'mid the light of a brighter and happier morn."

The supposed Marcellin, now the unhappy Ludibert, stretched forth his hands to the good master, and mildly turning his eyes to the spot where stood the late hated Nordenholm, a friendly smile played upon his features; he pressed his hand, bowed down his head upon it, and died.

Now, too, it was first observed that the female attendant had fallen into a swoon by the side of the bier. The old man gently raised up her head, and held her until she came to herself; when, refusing all farther assistance, with feeble step, and drawing her hood and cloak closer around her, she proceeded towards the hospital. The students again raised the bier, and in perfect silence bore the deceased slowly along towards an ancient half-dilapidated church at a short distance; while Nordenholm, not a little consoled after seeing Ludibert's happy departure, with his usual promptness and decision pointed out to them, in few words, when they had laid down the bier at the church door, all that was necessary to be observed on such an occasion, and how they might best clear up their conduct by shunning not, and by disguising nothing from the civil power.

The students, bowing respectfully and returning their unanimous thanks, while they at the same time condoled with him, then took their leave, showing by the sorrow of their countenances, how much their hearts were amended.

Meanwhile the spital woman had beckoned the aged

Rhenfried to accompany her, and stopped as she was entering the hospital under the vaulted entrance, where she began to enter into earnest discourse with him. Seeing the Professor approaching, the old master beckoned to him, and said, "Here, friend, this good woman wishes to communicate something to us; let us hear her!"

She then threw back her veil and hood, and there stood before them the long-lost and lamented Agnes; saintly pale, indeed, and bearing the traces of deep suffering, but whose features were not to be mistaken by the eye of a father, and of a lover. In the same serious and lofty frame of mind, produced by what had so recently happened, all three seemed now to regard earthly sorrows and earthly wishes with a spirit of serene and cheerful patience, and whatever the future might have in store for them, either to part with or bear, they were already prepared for, and saw as it were approaching along the vista of coming years.

Little Margery, who had laid herself to sleep beside the rose tree, overpowered with the last night's anxieties and fatigue, now came skipping towards them, and playfully caressing the weeping Agnes, said, "How beautiful you look this morning, dear Lady Sibylla, now you have thrown aside your black cap and hood; but you must not cry—women never cry!" But her delight knew no bounds when she learned that the lady was going home to live with her, and was to have the room of the strange old lodger for her own, who was never coming back any more.

This, too, she found to be all true. She was quite enraptured at the change, and under the delicate and incessant guardianship and attentions lavished upon her by the three friends, pretty Margery grew and flourished, until she bloomed in full beauty, one of the most fair and lovely flowers in the rich garland of Germany's gentle women.

FRIEDRICH HEINRICH KARL, BARON DE LA MOTTE FOUQUÉ

(1777–1843)

✣

II

ASLAUGA'S KNIGHT

(Translated by THOMAS CARLYLE)

I

IN the Island of Funen, there lived, in old times, a noble gentleman, called Froda the Skalds'-friend; a title which had been given him, because he not only took delight in hospitably entertaining all famous and honourable singers in his fair Castle, but also laboured, with great industry, in collecting any ancient songs, tales, or traditions, which might still be met with in Runic manuscripts, or otherwise. With this view, he had even made some voyages to Iceland, and, in the course of them, fought several bloody battles with the pirates; as indeed he was, in all points, a bold knightly hero, and vied with his great ancestors not only in the matter of poetry, but also of war. He was still a blooming young man; yet all the other nobles of the Island were accustomed to combine in his counsels and follow his banner; nay, his fame had passed over sea, and was known in the neighbouring Empire of Germany. This also was what he wished; for it would have broken his heart had he thought that of him no songs would be sung, and no tales told, in after days.

One fine autumn evening, this worthy lord was sitting before his Castle, as he often did at that time of day, both that he might have a free view on all sides over land and

sea; and also that he might invite any passing traveller to come in with him, and taste his hospitality. However, on the present occasion, he took little notice of the sights he was wont to look at; for an old Book, in artful, beautifully painted characters, had just been sent over to him by a learned Icelander, and was now lying on his knee. It was the story of Aslauga, the fair daughter of Sigurd, who at first, concealing her high birth, and in mean apparel, had herded goats for some poor peasants; then, in her gold veil of flowing tresses, had pleased King Ragnar Lodbrog, and at last, as his queenly spouse, had adorned the Danish throne till the end of her days.

The Knight Froda felt within his mind as if the graceful Lady Aslauga were rising in life and bodily presence before him; so that his brave still heart, devoted indeed in knightly service to all women, but hitherto untouched with passion for any individual female, now flamed up in bright love for this fair daughter of Sigurd. "What matters it," thought he, "that she has vanished from the Earth long years ago? She still sees so bright and clear into this heart of mine; and what more would a knight desire? Therefore shall she henceforth, for ever and ever, be my gentle dame, and my helper in fight and song." In this mood, he made some verses on his new mistress, which ran as follows:

"They ride and they seek with toil and care,
To find a heart's mistress passing fair;
Through tower and through town they ride and seek,
To find a heart's mistress passing meek;
Where rivers are rolling and mountains rise,
To find a heart's mistress passing wise:
Ah, Knights! ye may seek, and seek full long,
'Tis I have found her in Realms of Song!
I've found her, this mistress, wise, fair, and meek,
How hearts can adore, my sword shall speak:
And should I not see her while toiling Here,
O, Yonder, her form is light and clear;
And dwells she not down in Earth, this love,
Our spirits are one in lands Above.
Good-night, thou old world!—Sweet love, 'tis past!
Who seeketh in faith, will find at last."

"Much depends on fortune, too," said a hollow voice, hard by the Knight; and, on looking round, he observed the form of a poor peasant woman, so closely shrouded up in grey-coloured wrappings, that he could not see the smallest portion of her face. She was looking over his shoulder into the Book, and she said, with a deep sigh: "I know this story well; and I myself fare no better than the lady it is written of." Froda looked at her with amazement. "Yes indeed, yes indeed," continued she, with strange becks and nods: "Sure, I am the descendant of the great Rolf, to whom the fairest castles, and forests, and fields of this Island belonged; thy castle, and thy lands, Froda, among others. And now we are sunk into poverty; and because I am not so fair as Aslauga, there is nothing can be done for me, and I am fain to hide my poor face altogether." It seemed as if she wept warm tears under her covering. At this Froda was touched, and he begged of her, for Heaven's sake, to let him know how he might help her; he was a descendant, he said, of the great Northland heroes, and perhaps something more than they, a good Christian. "I almost fancy," murmured she beneath her veil, "that thou art the same Froda whom they name the Good, and the Skalds'-friend, and of whose mildness and greatness of mind they tell such strange stories. If it is so, I may still find help. Thou hast but to give me the half of thy fields and meadows; I should then be in something like a state to live as beseemeth the descendant of the great Rolf."

Then Froda looked thoughtfully on the ground, both because she had asked so much, and because he was considering whether she could be in truth descended from the mighty Rolf. But after a short pause, the veiled woman said: "I must be mistaken, then, it seems; and thou art not that far-famed, gentle-hearted Froda. Would Froda have thought so long over such a trifle! But I will try the utmost. See, for the fair Aslauga's sake, of whom thou hast

been reading, and wert just singing; for the sake of Sigurd's bright daughter, fulfil my petition."

Then Froda started up with a glowing heart, and cried: "Let is be as thou hast said!" and held out to her his knightly hand, in confirmation. But he could not grasp the fingers of the woman, though her dim shape continued standing close by him. At this, a secret shudder began to creep over his frame, while suddenly a light seemed to issue from the form; a golden light, which covered her as with a dazzling garment; and he felt in his mind as if Aslauga were standing before him, clothed in the waving veil of her gold hair, and looking on him with a kind smile. Transported and blinded, he sank on his knee. On again rising up he saw nothing but an autumn cloud passing over the meadows, fringed in its outline with the last brightness of twilight, and then disappearing far off among the waves of the sea.

The Knight knew not what to make of this occurrence. In deep reflection, he returned to his apartments; at one time thinking for certain that he had seen Aslauga herself; at another, that some goblin had risen before him with deceitful juggleries, mocking, in spiteful wise, the service which he had vowed to the departed lady. But, thenceforth, whether he was passing over dale, and heath, and forest, or sailing on the sea billows, suchlike appearances frequently met him. Once he found a cithern lying in the wood, and scared off a wolf from it; and while the cithern of itself broke forth into sweet tones, a fair baby rose out of it, as of old Aslauga herself had done, when found in a similar manner. At other times, he would see goats clambering among the cliffs by the shore, and a golden form as if herding them; then again a resplendent queen in a glittering bark would seem to glide past him, and salute him with smiles. And still, when he tried to get near aught of this, it was vapour, and cloud, and air. A poet might sing many songs of these things. So much, however, he gathered from

it, that the fair dame, Aslauga, had accepted his service, and that he had in deed and in truth become her knight.

II

During these things, winter had come on, and again passed away. In northern countries, this young season of the year, to those who understand it and know how to love it, is always wont to bring along with it a crowd of most fair and expressive images; with which, if you speak of earthly enjoyment, many a man might content himself for his whole earthly life. But at this time, when the spring came glancing forth with its budding leaves and its streaming brooks, there came likewise from the German Empire a most flowery and sunshiny piece of tidings over to Funen.

On the rich banks of the Mayn, where he pours his flood through the blessed land of Franconia, there stood an almost royal fortress, the orphan heiress of which was a relative of the German Kaiser. She was called Hildegardis, and acknowledged far and wide for the fairest of virgins. Now, her Imperial uncle wished also that she should wed the boldest Knight that could be found far and wide, and no other than the boldest. Accordingly, he followed the example of many noble chiefs in such cases, and appointed a Tournament, in which the first prize should be the hand of the lovely Hildegardis, provided that the victor were not already married, or occupied in his heart with some other fair friend. For the lists were not to be shut against any knightly warrior of proper bearing and birth, that the contest of courage and strength to be displayed might be so much the richer. Of all this, Froda's German brethren wrote him full accounts, and he made ready for appearing at the festival.

Before all, he forged for himself a gallant suit of mail, as indeed, among the whole armourers of the North, a region famed on this account, he was the most expert. The helmet

he worked of pure gold, and formed it in such a way that it looked on all parts like mere clustering locks, recalling to his mind the golden hair of Aslauga. Thus, also, he fashioned on the breast-plate of his harness, which was coated with silver, a gold shape in half-relief, representing Aslauga in her tressy veil; to make it clear to all at the commencement of the Tourney, that this Knight, bearing on his breast the figure of a lady, was fighting not for the hand of the fair Hildegardis, but for the joy of battle and knightly honour.

Then he led his gay Danish horse from its stall, put it carefully on shipboard, and sailed over in safety.

III

In one of those fair boxwood thickets, which you often see in the kind lands of Germany, he once fell in with a young friendly Knight, of delicate form; who having just, in the gayest manner, spread out his repast on the green sward, under the shadow of pleasant boughs, invited the brave Northman to partake of it. As the two were here dining cheerfully together, they felt a kindness in their hearts towards one another; and rejoiced to observe, on rising, that their present destinations led them both the same road. Not that they had signified this in words; on the contrary, the young Knight, whose name was Edwald, was of an extremely taciturn nature, so that he could sit for hours with a quiet smile on his face, and never once open his mouth. But in this quiet smile itself there came a pious and kindly grace to view; and then, when at times a simple but significant word escaped over his lips, it appeared as a gift deserving thanks. So likewise was it with the little songs, which he now and then chanted. They were almost as soon ended as begun; but in their short lines dwelt a deep graceful life, whether it shaped itself as a friendly sigh, or as a blessed smile. The noble Froda felt as if a younger brother had been riding at his hand, or even a tender blooming son.

In this way they continued several days together: it almost seemed as if their paths were marked out for them in inseparable union; and much as they rejoiced in this, they used to look at one another, at outsetting, or when crossways met, with an air of sadness, as if asking whether there would still appear no diversity in their direction. Nay, it seemed as if in Edwald's downcast eye a tear were gathering.

It happened once, that in their inn, they came upon a rude overbearing Knight; of gigantic form and strong limbs, and foreign un-German speech and manners. He came, it appeared, from Bohemia. This Knight looked over with a strange smile to Froda, who had again spread out the old Book with Aslauga's History before him, and was diligently reading it. "Perhaps you are a clerical Knight?" he inquired of him, and seemed ready furnished to commence a whole train of unseemly jests. But the negative reply came over Froda's lips in so grave and firm a tone, that the foreign Knight on the instant stopped short; as you often see the smaller animals, when they have risked a little liberty with their king the Lion, shrink into peace at a single look from him. Into peace, however, this foreign Knight did not shrink. On the other hand he now began to break jokes on Edwald, on his youth, his silence, and delicate form; all which the latter bore for some time with great patience; but at last when the stranger ventured a too injurious word, he rose up, girt on his sword, and said with a dainty bow: "I thank you, sir, for your wish to give me opportunity of proving that I am no timid or unpractised follower of knighthood. For in this view alone can your behaviour be excused, which otherwise I should be obliged to call extremely uncivil. Would you please——?"

With this he stept out before the door; the Bohemian followed him with a scornful smile; and Froda, much concerned for his young friend, whose honour was, however, far too precious in his eyes to allow a thought of in any way taking up the cause himself.

It soon appeared that the Northman's anxiety had been groundless. With equal vigour and address, young Edwald fell on his gigantic adversary; so that to look upon the matter, it was almost like those battles between knights and forest monsters, of which we read in old books. The issue, too, was of the same sort. As the Bohemian was collecting all his strength for a decisive stroke, Edwald darted in on him, and with the force of a wrestler cast him to the ground. Then, however, he spared his conquered enemy; courteously helped him up again, and went to seek his horse. In a little, he and Froda left the inn; and their journey once more led them both the same way.

"From henceforth I am glad of this," said Froda, pointing with a look of satisfaction to their common road. "For I must own to thee, Edkin"—he was wont in pleasant confidence to call his young friend by this childlike name—"I must own to thee, when I thought hitherto, that perhaps thou wert journeying with me to the Tournament in honour of the fair Hildegardis, a certain care rose up over my heart. Thy true knightly spirit I well knew; but I dreaded lest the force in thy tender arms might not suffice it. At length I have come to know thee as a swordsman, that may long seek his match; and Heaven be thanked if our paths go on and on, one way; and welcome to me, by the first chance, to front me in the lists!"

But Edwald looked at him with a sad countenance, and said: "What can my strength and skill avail me, when it is with thee I am to try them, and for the highest prize of life, which only one of us can gain? Ah! this heavy news, that thou also art proceeding to the fair Hildegardis' Tournament, I have long foreboded with sorrowful heart."

"Edkin," answered the smiling Froda, "thou kind gentle child, dost thou not see, then, that I already wear the image of a mistress on my breast-plate? My battle is but for the honour of victory, not for thy fair Hildegardis."

"*My* fair Hildegardis!" sighed Edwald. "That she will

never be in this world: or if she should—Ah, Froda! it would break thy heart. I know well, the Northland faith is deep-rooted like your rocks, and hard to melt like their snowy tops; but let no son of man believe that he can look unpunished into the fair eyes of Hildegardis. Has not she, the proud, the overproud maiden, so crazed my still, humble mind, that I have forgotten the chasm which is lying betwixt us, and am hastening after her, and would rather die than renounce the wild hope of gaining this eagle spirit for myself."

"I will help thee, Edkin," answered Froda, still smiling. "Could I but know how this queenly mistress looks! She must resemble the Walkeurs of our Heathen ancestors, I think, since so many gallant heroes yield before her."

Edwald, with a serious air, took a picture from his breastplate, and held it up to him. Fixed, and as if enchanted, Froda gazed upon it; his cheeks glowed, his eyes sparkled; the smile vanished from his face, as sunlight fades away from the meadows before the advancing blackness of the storm.

"Dost thou see now, my loidly comrade," muttered Edwald, "that for one, or perhaps for both of us, the joy of life is gone?"

"Not yet," answered Froda, with a violent effort over his mind; "but hide thy strange picture, and let us rest beneath this shade. The duel must have tired thee a little; and for me an unwonted weariness presses me down with leaden weight."

They dismounted from their horses: and reclined themselves on the sward.

IV

The noble Froda had no purpose of sleeping; he wished without disturbance to begin a stout struggle with himself, and try, if so might be, to drive from his mind the frightfully fair image of Hildegardis. But it was as if the foreign

power had already grown a portion of his own life; and at last a restless dreamy sleep did in fact overshadow his exhausted senses. He fancied himself fighting among a crowd of knights, and Hildegardis was looking on with smiles from a gay balcony; and as he was about gaining the prize, he perceived Edwald moaning in his blood under the hoofs of the horses. Again it seemed to him that he was standing by the side of Hildegardis in a church, and about to be married to her; he knew well that it was not right; and the Yes, which he was to pronounce, he pressed back with resolute force into his heart; and in doing so his eyes were wetted with warm tears. Out of still wilder and more perplexed visions Edwald's voice at length awoke him. He sat up; and his young comrade was saying in a kind tone, directed towards a neighbouring bush: "Come back, however, noble maid. I will surely help you if I can; I did not mean to scare you away; only you were not to interrupt my brother in his sleep." A departing gleam of gold glittered over through the twigs.

"For Heaven's sake, comrade," cried Froda starting to his feet, "whom art thou speaking to, whom didst thou see near me?"

"I know not rightly how it was, myself," said Edwald. "Thou hadst scarcely fallen asleep, when a figure came forward from the wood, wrapped up in deep dark coverings: at first I took her for a peasant woman. She sat down by thy head, and though I could see nothing of her face I observed that she was in grief, and even saw her weeping. I beckoned to her to remove, and not disturb thee; and was about to offer her a piece of gold, supposing her distress arose from poverty. But suddenly my hand was as it were rendered powerless; and a terror passed through my heart, as if I had conceived such a thought against a queen. At the same time glittering gold locks here and there waved out from among her coverings, and the grove began almost to shine with the reflection of them. 'Poor boy,' said she

then, 'thou lovest in thy own breast, and canst figure how a high female soul must burn in keen sadness, when a hero that engaged to be ours, turns away his heart, and is drawn to lower hopes like a weak bondsman.' Thereupon she rose, and disappeared with a sigh in that bush. I almost felt, Froda, as if she named thee."

"Yes, she named me," answered Froda; "and she has not named me in vain. Aslauga! thy knight comes on; he rides into the lists, and for thee and thy renown alone. And in the meanwhile, Edkin, we will win thy proud bride for thee also." With this, full of his old proud joyfulness, he again sprang on horseback; and whenever the magic of Hildegardis' beauty was about to mount up before him, to dazzle and perplex, he gave a smile and cried "Aslauga!" and his inward sun again beamed forth serene and cloudless.

V

On a balcony in the stately Castle of the Mayn, Hildegardis was accustomed to enjoy the cool of the evening, looking over the rich sweet scene; and with still more pleasure over the gleam of arms, which might generally be seen at the same time on many distant roads, from knights journeying hither, with and without retinue, purposing for the high prize of the Tournament to try their force and courage in it. She was in truth a very proud and high-minded maiden; and perhaps carried matters farther in this respect than even her glancing beauty and princely rank could altogether justify. Now, as she was once looking over the glittering roads with her usual smile, a young damsel of her train began this little song:

Ah were I but a little bird,
To sing from tree to tree;
And telling no one e'er a word,
Come out so frank and free
With all, O with all that dwelt in me!

Ah were I but a little flower,
To bloom on grassy lea:
With my sweet perfumes every hour,
Come out so frank and free
With all, O with all that dwelt in me!

Ah I am but an armed Knight
Bound over land and sea;
Must shut my heart in rest and fight;
And laid in grave shall be
My all, O my all that dwells in me!

"Why do you sing this song, and even now?" said Hildegardis, striving to look very proud and scornful at it, yet a deep secret sadness was visibly enough flitting over her face. "It came into my head I know not how," replied the maid, "as I looked up the road, where the soft Edwald with his dainty little songs first came to us; it was he that taught me this. But seems it not, my mistress, and you, good girls, as if Edwald were riding hither that way again this moment?" —"Dreams!" sneered Hildegardis; and yet for a long while could not lead away her eye from the knight, till at last almost by violence she turned it on Froda, his companion, saying: "Well, yes, that one is Edwald. But what have you to see in that meek humble boy? Here cast your eyes, my maidens, on that other lofty form, if you would see a proper man." She was silent. Through her bosom went a sound as of prophesying, that now the conqueror of the Tournament was riding into the court; and for the first time in her life, in looking at the stately Northman, she felt a submissive, almost painful reverence for a human being.

At supper the two new-come Knights were placed opposite the queenly Hildegardis. As Froda, after the fashion of the North, was sitting in full armour, the golden figure of Aslauga glittered from the silver cuirass full in the eyes of the proud lady. She smiled haughtily, as if she felt that it depended but on her will to drive the image of that fair one from the breast and the heart of the Knight. But suddenly a clear golden gleam passed through the hall, so that Hildegardis

cried: "What keen lightning!" and covered her eyes with her hands. Froda, however, looked with joyful salutation at the bright splendour. Thereby Hildegardis' fear of him grew still deeper; though she thought within herself: "This highest and most mysterious of men was before all others born for her alone." Yet she could not help often looking, almost against her will, with emotion and warmth at the poor Edwald, who was sitting there so silent and kindly, as if he were smiling compassionately on his own sorrow and his own vain hope.

When the two Knights were left alone in their apartment, Edwald still kept looking for a long time from the window into the fresh airy night. Then he sang to his cithern:

A Hero so true,
A Boy who loved
This hero proved,
They went through the world, these two.

The Hero did win
Him peace and joy;
This saw the Boy,
And had his delight therein

But Froda took the cithern from his hands, and said: "No, Edkin, I will teach thee another song. Listen:

The Hall it grows bright as at morning-tide,
The Maiden is come in beauty's pride:
She looks on the right, and then round the left;
No gallant is yet of hope bereft.
He there with the golden cloak will 't be?
She glances aside: I think, not he.
Or he with the cunning talk and wise?
She's turning from him her ear and eyes.
Belike 'tis the Prince with the pearls and gold?
Her look on that side is short and cold.
Then who, in the world, let us hear, I pray,
Who is 't that the Maid at last will say?
All silent and sorrowing, sits apart
A dainty young Squire; he rules her heart.
They tell many tales to themselves, I wot;
That one, he shall win, and knows it not."

Edwald's heart was glowing within his breast. "As God will," said he, low to himself; "but I think I should never understand how such a thing had come to pass."

"As God will!" repeated Froda. The two friends embraced, and soon after fell cheerfully asleep.

VI

Some days after this, Froda was once sitting in a remote grove of the Castle garden, reading in the ancient Book about his fair mistress Aslauga. Now, it chanced that Hildegardis was passing that way at the time. She stopped thoughtfully, and said:

"How comes it, you strange compound of Knight and cunning Master, that you keep the rich treasures of your knowledge so much to yourself? I should think you must have many fine stories ready in your mind; for instance, the one you have before you even now: for I see some bright dainty figures of fair virgins and noble heroes painted among the letters."

"In sooth, it is the lordliest and loveliest story this, in the whole world," answered Froda. "But ye have no patience, and no seriousness, to listen to our old Northland tales."

"Who told you that?" said Hildegardis, with a little pride, which she liked to assume towards Froda when she could; then seated herself on the stone bench opposite him, and gave order that "he should forthwith read to her somewhat from the Book."

Froda began; and, in the very exertion with which he laboured to translate the old heroic Iceland speech into German, his heart and soul flamed up in more solemn fervour. When he raised his eyes now and then, he looked into Hildegardis' beaming countenance, as for joy and sympathy and admiration, it glanced still fairer and fairer; and thoughts went through his mind, as if she, after all,

might be his appointed bride on Earth, to whom Aslauga herself was conducting him.

Then suddenly the characters grew strangely perplexed before his eyes; it was as if the figures were beginning to move, and he was forced to stop. But, as he was looking with strained sight into the Book, to drive away this wondrous interruption, he heard a well-known, gently-solemn voice, saying: "Make a little room, fair lady. The story which the Knight is reading to you treats of me, and I like to hear it."

Before the eyes of the gazing Froda sat his mistress Aslauga, in the pomp of her golden waving locks, on the bench beside Hildegardis. The maiden, with tears of fright in her eyes sank back in a swoon. Aslauga threatened her Knight, earnestly but kindly, with her fair right hand, and vanished.

"What have I done to you," cried Hildegardis, recovering from her faint by his exertions, "what have I done to you, wicked Knight, that you call your Northern spectres to my side, and with your horrid magic frighten me to death?"

"Dame," answered Froda, "so help me God, I did not call this mysterious lady, who has just appeared to us. But her will I now know full well; and so I recommend you to God's keeping."

With this, he walked thoughtfully out of the grove.

In affright, Hildegardis fled on the other side, from the sombre gloom of the leaves, and stept forth on a fair open green, where Edwald, in the fine glow of twilight, was plucking flowers; and, with friendly smiles, he offered her a nosegay of narcissuses and sensitive violets.

VII

The day appointed for the Tournament had now arrived; and a great Duke, commissioned as deputy by the Emperor, arranged all things in the lordliest and most splendid fashion

for the solemn festival. Large, and level, and beautifully shaped, lay the jousting-ground; strewed with the finest sand, that man and horse might have proper footing on it; and glancing forth almost like a pure field of snow in the middle of the green lea. Rich cloths of silk from Arabia, decorated in curious interlacings with Indian gold, hung many-coloured over the lists enclosing the space, and flowed down from the high scaffoldings erected for ladies and princely spectators. At the upper end, under a canopy of golden arches, tastefully and boldly crossed and combined, was Hildegardis' station. Green garlands and wreaths waved gracefully between the glittering pillars, in the fine July air; and, with impatient eyes, the crowding multitude outside the lists looked up to this, expecting the sight of the fairest maiden in Germany; and only now and then drawn some other way by the stately entrance of men-at-arms, riding gallantly through the barriers. O! how many bright harnesses, and richly-embroidered cloaks of satin, and high-waving plumes, were to be seen there that day! The lordly host, saluting each other and speaking together, swayed this way and that, on the ground within the lists, like a flower-bed stirred by the breath of the air; but a bed where the stalks had grown to trees, and the yellow and white leaves had bloomed into gold and silver, and the dew-drops had hardened into pearls and diamonds. For whatever was beautiful and precious in the world, these noble gentlemen had tastefully and variedly expended on the glory of that day.

Many eyes were turned on Froda, who, without scarf, or plume, or cloak, with his silver-gleaming cuirass, and Aslauga's golden figure on it, and his well-wrought helmet of golden locks, glittered from amid the crowd like polished brass. Others also there were, that found their enjoyment in looking at young Edwald, who wore a cloak of white satin, fringed with azure and silver, almost covering his whole armour; and a large plume of swan-white feathers, over-

flowing his whole helmet. To view him, he seemed decorated with almost feminine grace; and yet the rare force with which he managed his wild white steed, announced the victorious strength of this tender hero.

In strange contrast with these two, was a giant shape in armour, dressed in a cloak of black shining bear-skin, trimmed with fine fur, without any ornament of clear metal whatever; even his helmet was overlaid with black bear-skin; and, instead of plumes, a mane of blood-red horse-hair streamed copiously down on all sides from it. Froda and Edwald knew the dark Knight well; it was their uncivil guest in the inn; and he likewise seemed to recognise the two friends; for he whirled his horse abruptly round, pressed through the crowd of fighters, and, after speaking some time at the lists with an ugly, brass-coloured old woman, sprang over the enclosure with a wild leap, and, darting off like an arrow, vanished out of sight. The old woman nodded after him with a friendly gesture; the multitude laughed, as at a strange Carnival show; and Edwald and Froda had their own almost frightsome thoughts on the matter; which, however, they did not see meet to impart to each other.

The kettledrums rolled, the trumpets sounded: leaning on the old Duke's arm, Hildegardis, richly attired, more resplendent still in all the brightness of her own beauty, stept forward, under the arching of the golden bower, and courtesied to the assembly. The Knights bowed their heads to the ground, and perhaps in every one of their hearts this thought might be beating: "There is no man on Earth that can merit so royal a bride." While Froda bowed, it seemed to him the golden light of Aslauga's tresses glanced over his eye; and his heart was proud and gay, that his mistress held him worthy to be put in mind of her so often.

The Tournament began. At first, the trial was with blunt swords and battle-axes; then man to man, with lances; and, finally, the whole host parted into two equal bodies, and

commenced a universal fight, in which it stood with every one to use sword or spear, as he pleased.

Froda and Edwald had alike gained the prize over their rivals; as each, justly estimating his own and his friend's courageous force, had in some degree anticipated: and now the two were to decide, by a match at running with the lance, to whom the highest crown of victory belonged. Before commencing, they rode slowly into the middle of the course together, and settled where they were to take their places.

"Keep thy inspiring star firmly in thy eye," smiled Froda. "I, too, shall not want the like gracious help."

Edwald looked round with astonishment to see the mistress whom his friend seemed to have in view, and the latter continued:

"I did wrong to conceal aught from thee; but after the jousting, thou shalt know all. For the present, heed not unnecessary thoughts, dear Edkin, and sit firm, firm in thy saddle; for I tell thee, I will run with all my force; seeing it is not my own honour only that is at stake, but the far higher honour of my lady."

"In such wise I also purpose to do," said Edwald, kindly. They shook hands, and then rode to their places.

At the pealing of the trumpets, the friends, dashing forward quick as arrows, again met together. Their lances shivered into splinters; the horses staggered; the Knights, unmoved in their stirrups, plucked them up, and rode back to their stations.

When the signal was given for another course, Edwald's white steed snorted, wild and affrighted; Froda's strong chesnut reared into the air. It was clear that the two noble animals both dreaded a second hard encounter; but the Knights held them firm with bit and spur, and, at a new call of the trumpets, they again thundered forward, fierce and obedient. Edwald had, with a deep glowing look, anew impressed his soul with the beauty of his mistress; at the moment of meeting, he cried aloud: "Hildegardis!" and so

hard did his lance strike his valiant adversary, that the latter sank back on the haunches of his horse, with difficulty kept his saddle, and scarcely continued stirrup-fast; while Edwald, without wavering, dashed by; lowered his spear in salutation as he passed Hildegardis' bower; and then, amid the loud huzzaing of the multitude, galloped to his place for the third course. Ah! Hildegardis herself had greeted him with blushes and kind looks, in her surprise; and he felt as if the intoxicating bliss of this victory were already won.

Won, however, it was *not*; for the noble Froda, glowing with warlike shame, was again taming his frighted horse, and chastising it with sharp strokes of his spurs, for the share it had borne in this mischief. At the same time he said, in a low voice: "Dear fair mistress, show thyself visibly to me; it concerns thy name's honour."

To all other persons, it seemed as if a rosy golden summer cloud were flitting over the deep blue sky; but Froda looked into the heavenly face of his mistress; felt himself, as it were, fanned by her golden tresses; and "Aslauga!" cried he, and the Knights rushed together; and far from his horse flew Edwald, down upon the dusty course.

VIII

Froda, in knightly fashion, first for a space continued in motionless stillness; as if waiting to see whether any one yet thought of contesting him the victory; and, on his mailed horse, he looked almost like a lofty statue of metal. All around, the people stood silent in abashed astonishment; and as they did break out in the cry of triumph, he beckoned solemnly with his hand, and all were again dumb. Then, with a light bound, he was out of his saddle, and hastened to the place where the fallen Edwald was rising. He pressed him closely to his heart; led his white steed to him, and insisted on holding the stirrup as he mounted. Then he himself again sprang on horseback also, and rode by the side

of Edwald to Hildegardis' gold bower; where, with lowered spear and lifted visor, he thus spoke:

"Fairest of all living women, I bring you here Edwald, your knightly bridegroom, before whose lance and sword all the heroes of this Tournament have yielded, I excepted, to whom the lordly jewel of the victory can nowise belong; seeing, as the figure on my cuirass shows, I already serve another mistress."

The Duke was on the point of stepping forward to the two Knights, to conduct them up to the bower; but a sign from Hildegardis restrained him; and she said, with angry, agitated looks:

"Then it seems, my Danish Knight, Sir Froda, you serve your lady ill; for, even now, you have openly called me the fairest of living women."

"This I did," answered Froda, with a courteous bow, "because my fair mistress belongs to the dead."

A slight horror breathed through the multitude at these words, and through Hildegardis' heart; but soon the anger of the virgin again flamed up, and the more, as the lordliest and most wondrous knight whom she knew despised her for the sake of one dead.

"I made known to all," cried she, with solemn earnestness, "that by the just will of my Imperial uncle, this hand can belong to no vanquished man, how noble and renowned soever he may otherwise have appeared. And as the conqueror in this Tournament is bound by service elsewhere, this battle must for me be accounted no battle, and I go hence as I came, a free unaffianced maid."

The Duke seemed desirous of remonstrating; but she turned proudly from him, and left the bower. At this instant, a sharp unexpected gust of air laid hold of the green garlands and wreaths, and threw their ravelled and rustling festoons after her; wherein the people, dissatisfied with her haughtiness, thought they saw a threatening omen; and so, with murmurs of derisive approval, they dispersed.

IX

The two Knights had returned, in deep silence, to their apartments. Arrived there, Edwald had himself disharnessed: he placed all the pieces of his fair bright armour carefully together, with a kind exactness, almost as if he were burying a beloved friend that was dead. Then he beckoned his squires to leave the chamber, took his lute in his arm, and sang this little song to its notes:

"Who's this thou art laying
In grave so still?
My wild, my unstaying,
And froward will.
Sleep soundly, thou will, in thy narrow bed!
My hope sleeps with thee, 'tis cold and dead."

"Thou wilt make me hate thy lute," said Froda: "do now, accustom it to merrier touches. It is far too good for a passing-bell, and thou, in sooth, for such a bellman. I tell thee, my young hero, it will all be right, and as it should be."

Edwald looked in his face with astonishment for a while, then answered kindly: "No, dear Froda, if it offends thee, I will surely not sing again." However, he struck a few notes from the lute, which sounded infinitely tender and loving. Then the Northman, much moved, caught him in his arms, and said: "Dear Edkin, sing, and speak, and do whatever pleases thee; to me it will always be delightful. But thou mayest believe it well, when I say to thee, with no unaided knowledge, that thy sorrow must end; whether to death or life I yet see not, but great surpassing joy does await thee, for certain." Firm and cheerful Edwald rose from his seat, grasped his companion's arm, and stept out with him, through blooming shrubberies, into the airy coolness of twilight.

At this same hour, an old woman, disguised in much superfluous apparel, was proceeding, under secret guidance,

to the fair Hildegardis' chamber. The woman was swarthy, and singular to look upon; by many feats of art, she had collected about her a part of the multitude returning from the Tournament, and, in the end, had scared them all asunder in wild horror. Before this last occurrence, Hildegardis' girdle-maid had hastened to her mistress, to entertain her with the strange, merry, conjuring tricks of the old brass-coloured woman; and the ladies of the suite, striving to banish the chagrin of their disconsolate Princess, bade the messenger call in the crone. Hildegardis assented, hoping thereby to divert the attention of her maidens from herself; and so be permitted, with more deep and earnest attention, to watch the varying forms that were flitting in confusion through her mind.

Hildegardis' maid found the place already empty, and the old brass-coloured stranger standing in the middle of it, laughing immoderately. Being questioned, the woman did not hesitate to tell how she had, in a twinkling, disguised herself in the shape of a huge owl, and in screeching words, informed the spectators that she was the Devil, whereupon every one of them had with loud shrieks run off for home.

The maid felt frightened at the thought of such hateful jesting; yet she durst not go back to ask new orders from her mistress, having already noticed the bad humour she was in. Therefore she satisfied herself with enjoining on the old woman, under many promises and threats, the strictest charges to behave herself with proper discreetness and good-manners in the Castle; and then led her in by the most secret paths, that none of those she had just frightened might notice her.

The crone now appeared before Hildegardis; and, in the midst of a deep humble courtesy, nodded to her, in a strange confidential wise, as if the two had been concerned in some mutual secret. The Princess involuntarily shrunk together at this movement; yet, hideous as the old woman's face appeared to her, she could not for a moment turn away her

mild, but clear-glittering light, and checked Froda's utterance, who was, even now, preparing to acquaint his friend of his plighted service to the fair Aslauga; having hitherto been hindered from it, first by Edwald's sadness, and then by his impatience in travelling. Ah! this soft lovely gold light was well known to Froda. "Let us follow it, Edkin," said he, in a low voice; "and let the horses, in the meanwhile, rest and graze." Edwald, without answering, did as his companion advised. An inward voice, half-sweet, half-fearful, seemed to tell him that here was the path to Hildegardis, and the sole path that led to her. Once only he said, with a tone of surprise: "I never saw the twilight glance so beautifully on the leaves as it is doing now." Froda shook his head and smiled, and they pursued in silence their secret track.

On issuing from the other side of the alder-wood, at the shore of the Mayn, which almost encircled it by a sweeping turn, Edwald saw well that some other brightness than that of twilight was shining on them; for the night already hung in cloudy darkness in the sky, and their guiding beam stopped at the strand of the river. The waves were sufficiently enlightened by it, to expose to view a little woody island in the middle of the stream, and a boat on this side fastened to a stake. But on approaching the spot, the Knights descried new objects: A troop of horsemen, of strange foreign shape, all in deep slumber; and, reclining on cushions in the midst of them, a sleeping female dressed in white.

"Hildegardis!" smiled Edwald to himself, in scarcely audible tones; at the same time he drew his sword, making ready for battle, if so were the robbers might awaken; and beckoned to Froda to lift the sleeping lady, and bring her to a place of safety. But at that instant, something in the figure of an owl passed whirring over the black squadron; and, with a sudden rattling clang, they all started up, and flew with hideous howling to arms. A tumultuous unequal battle rose in the darkness, for the friendly gleam had

vanished. Froda and Edwald were parted in the press, and could only hear each other's stout war-cry from a far distance. Hildegardis, roused from her enchanted sleep, not knowing whether she was dreaming or awake, fled with bewildered senses, and bitterly weeping, into the deepest shades of the alders.

XI

Froda felt his arm growing weary, and the warm blood running down from two wounds in his shoulder. Therefore he determined so to die, that he might mount up with honour from his bloody grave, to the high mistress whom he served; and throwing his shield backwards, he grasped the handle of his sword with both hands, and rushed with a loud war-shout on the terrified enemy. Immediately he heard some voices crying: "It is the Northland Fury that is coming on him! The battle-madness!" And the host, in affright, darted asunder, and the wearied hero remained in his wounds alone in the darkness.

Then once more Aslauga's gold hair gleamed in the shades of the wood; and Froda, exhausted and leaning on his sword, looked towards it, and said: "I think not that I am yet wounded to death; but when it does come to this, then, O beloved mistress! then, of a surety, thou wilt likewise appear to me in all thy loveliness and splendour?" A low "Yes" came breathing over his cheeks, and the gold light vanished.

But now Hildegardis, almost fainting, staggered forth from the thickets, and said, with a feeble voice: "Within is the frightfully fair Northland spectre, and without is the battle! O good God! whither shall I turn?"

Then Froda went towards her with soothing gestures, was about to say many comforting words to her, and to ask concerning Edwald, when suddenly the sound of armour, and

wild shouts, gave notice that the Bohemian robbers were returning to the charge. Froda hastily conducted the maiden to the boat; pushed it off from the shore; and rowed with the last effort of his strength to reach the woody island, which he had before seen in the middle of the river. But the robbers had lit torches; they waved them sparkling this way and that; and by their light discovered the boat, as well as that their dreaded Danish enemy was wounded; and from this, new courage rose in their plundering hearts. Froda, before he reached the island, had heard a Bohemian on the other side coming down with a fresh skiff, then a crowd of the foe getting into it, and beginning to pull after him.

"To the wood, fair virgin!" whispered he, so soon as he had helped Hildegardis ashore. "Hide yourself there, while I try to keep the robbers from landing."

But Hildegardis clung fast to his arm, and whispered in reply: "Did I not see you stained in your blood, and pale? And would you that I die of terror in the solitary clefts of this dark hill? Ah! and if your Northland gold-haired lady-spirit were to come again, and sit down by me—Or think you, I do not see how she shines there through the bushes even now?"

"She shines!" repeated Froda; and new force and hope ran through his veins. He mounted the ascent, following the kind gleam; and though Hildegardis trembled at it, she willingly accompanied her guide; only now and then whispering, in an anxious voice: "Ah, Knight! my high, wondrous Knight! do not leave me alone here! It would be my death!" Soothing her with friendly encouragements, he walked on faster and faster, through the hollows and darkness of the wood: for he already heard the sound of the robbers landing on the shore of the island.

Suddenly he found himself at the mouth of a cave, thickly covered with bushes; and the gleam vanished. "Here, then!" whispered he, endeavouring to hold the branches

asunder, that Hildegardis might enter more easily. She paused for a moment, and said:

"If you were to let go the branches again behind me, and I were to be left alone with spectres in the cave!—Oh Heaven!—But, Froda, no doubt you will follow me, poor, frightened, hunted creature, will you not!"

In this confidence she stepped through the boughs; and Froda, who could have wished to remain as sentry, followed her. With strained ear he hearkened through the stillness of the night; Hildegardis durst scarcely draw her breath. The clanging of an armed footstep approached; nearer and nearer, close by the mouth of the cave; and Froda endeavoured in vain to get loose of the trembling maiden. The branches at the entrance were crashing and breaking; Froda sighed heavily: "So I must fall here, like a lurking fugitive, with women's veils floating round me! O God! it is a sorry end! But can I cast away from me this half-fainting form, and let her sink upon the dark, hard ground? Perhaps down into an abyss? Well, be then what must be! Thou, Aslauga, my mistress, knowest that I die in honour!"

"Froda! Hildegardis!" said a soft, well-known voice, at the entrance of the cavern; and, recognising Edwald, Froda, with glad readiness, carried out the Princess into the starlight: "She is dying in our hands for terror," said he, "in this black chasm. Are the enemy near?"

"Most part of them are lying dead on the shore, or floating in their blood among the waves. Lay aside anxiety, and rest yourselves. Art thou wounded, dear Froda?"

In answer to the questions of his astonished friends, he then briefly related, how, passing in the dark for a Bohemian knight, he had stept into the skiff with the rest; after which, on landing, he had found no difficulty in entirely confounding the robbers; who, seeing themselves attacked from the middle of their own troop, had imagined that they were bewitched. "At last," thus he ended his narrative, "they set to cutting down each other; and now we have only to

wait for morning, to begin our journey home with the Princess. For what of the owl-squadron still flits about, will of itself hide in daylight."

While relating these things, he had been preparing, with great care and daintiness, a bed of twigs and moss for Hildegardis; and the wearied lady having, with some gentle words of thanks, soon fallen asleep, he began to dress his friend's wounds, as well as the darkness would permit.

During this earnest occupation, under the moaning of the high dark trees, with the voice of the river-waves murmuring from a distance, Froda, in a low voice, informed his knightly brother what mistress it was that he served. Edwald listened in deep thought, but at last said:

"Believe me, however, the lofty Princess Aslauga will not be wroth with thee, though thou bind thyself in true love with this earthly fair one. Ah! surely even now thou art shining in the dreams of Hildegardis, thou richly-gifted happy hero! I will not stand in thy way with my foolish wishes: it is clear enough that she can never, never love me. Therefore this very day will I set forth to join the war, which so many bold German knights are waging in the heathen land of Prussia; and the black cross which makes them priestly warriors, I will lay, as the surest remedy, on my beating heart. And do thou, dear Froda, take the fair hand which thou hast won in knightly battle, and lead a life of happiness and satisfaction without example."

"Edwald," said Froda, in a serious tone, "this is the first time I ever heard a word from thy mouth, which an honest follower of knighthood could not turn to action. Do thou towards the fair haughty Hildegardis according to thy pleasure; but Aslauga remains my mistress, and no other will I serve in life or death."

At this rigorous answer the youth felt as it were rebuked, and was silent; and the two, without farther speech, sat watching throughout the night in their own solemn contemplations.

XII

Next morning, scarcely had the sun, bright and smiling, scattered his first radiance over the flowery plains round Hildegardis' Castle, when the watchman blew a merry air on his silver horn; for, with his falcon eyes, he had already from a far distance recognised the Princess, as she came riding along between her two deliverers. And from castle, and town, and hamlet, gay crowds issued forth, hastening to witness the glad arrival.

Hildegardis turned on Edwald her eyes, shining through tears, and said: "Had it not been for you, young hero, all these kind people might have sought long and vainly before finding me in my distress, and before tracing out the noble Froda, who doubtless must now have been lying dumb and cold, a bloody, mangled corpse, in the dark cleft of the rocks."

Edwald bowed humbly, but persisted in his usual silence; nay, it seemed as if some unwonted sorrow repressed even the friendly smile, which formerly, in sweet gentleness, came over his face so readily, at any word of kindness.

The Duke, Hildegardis' guardian, had, in the great joy of his heart, prepared a sumptuous morning repast, and invited to it all the dames and knights who were still there. Now, as Froda and Edwald were ascending the stair, in shining pomp, close after Hildegardis, the youth said in a half whisper to his friend:

"Thou canst indeed never more love me, thou noble, steadfast hero?" and as Froda looked at him with astonishment, he proceeded: "Thus it is when boys take it into their heads to counsel heroes, however well intended it may be. For now I have sinned heavily against thee, and against thy high mistress Aslauga still more."

"Because thou would'st have plucked away every flower in the garden of thy life, to give me pleasure?" said Froda. "No; thou continuest my gentle brother in knighthood

now as before, dear Edkin; perhaps thou art grown still dearer to me."

Then Edwald again smiled in still gladness, like a flower after the morning rain in May.

The eyes of Hildegardis glanced on him, mild and kindly; she often spoke with him also, in benignant words and tones; while, on the other hand, since yesternight, a reverent fear seemed to withdraw her from Froda. But Edwald, too, was much altered. With whatever humble joy he accepted the condescending favour of his mistress, it still seemed as if there stood something between the two, which forbade him every, even the most distant, hope of happiness in love.

Now, it chanced that a noble Count, from the Emperor's Court, was announced; who, being then bound on a weighty mission, wished to pay his reverence to the Princess in passing. She received him joyfully; and, directly after the first salutations, looking at her and Edwald, he said: "I know not if my good fortune has guided me to a most pleasant festival? It would be glad news for the Emperor my master."

Hildegardis and Edwald looked very lovely in their embarrassed blushing; and the Count, observing that he had been too hasty, bowed humbly to the young knight, and said: "Pardon me, noble Duke Edwald, my forward way; but I know the wish of my Sovereign, and the hope that this might be already fulfilled made my tongue forget itself."

The eyes of all present fixed inquiringly upon the young hero, who, with graceful embarrassment, thus spoke: "It is true, the Emperor, during my last attendance in his Imperial camp, had the excessive graciousness to make me a Duke. My good fortune so ordered it, that in one of our actions, some horsemen of the enemy, who had dared to attack the sacred person of our Sovereign, fled away just as I arrived at the spot."

The Count, at Hildegardis' request, circumstantially related this heroic achievement; and it came to light, that Edwald had not only saved the Emperor from the most imminent danger; but likewise, shortly afterwards arranged,

and, in the cool daring spirit of a general, victoriously fought, the main battle which decided the war.

Astonishment at first held every one mute; and before the congratulations could begin, Hildegardis turned to Edwald, and said, in a low voice, which, however, in the silence, was heard by all: "The noble Count has expressed the wish of my Imperial uncle; and I now conceal it no longer, my heart's wish is the same. I am Duke Edwald's bride."

With this, she held out to him her fair right hand; and all present waited only for his taking it, to break forth in loud approval. But Edwald did not do as they expected; on the contrary, he sank on his knee before the Princess, saying: "God forbid that the lofty Hildegardis should ever recall a word which she has solemnly spoken before dames and knights. To no vanquished man, you said, could the hand of the Emperor's niece belong; and there stands the noble Danish knight Froda, my conqueror."

Hildegardis turned hastily away with a slight blush, and hid her eyes; and while Edwald rose, it seemed as if a tear ran over his cheek.

Clanging in his armour, Froda stept into the middle of the hall, and exclaimed: "I declare my late victory over Duke Edwald to be pure accident, and again challenge the knightly hero into the lists to-morrow." And so saying, he threw down his iron gauntlet, and it rung on the floor.

But Edwald did not rise to lift it. On the contrary, a deep blush of anger glowed on his cheeks, his eyes glanced indignantly, so that you would scarcely have recognised him for the same person; and after a pause, he said: "Noble knight, Sir Froda, if I erred towards you, we are now even. How could you, a hero gloriously wounded of two sword-cuts, challenge a healthy man to-morrow into the lists, if you did not despise him?"

"Pardon me, Duke," answered Froda, somewhat put to shame, but in all cheerfulness; "I spoke too fast. Not till my complete cure do I challenge you."

Then Edwald joyfully lifted the gauntlet; again knelt down before Hildegardis, who, turning away her face, held him out her fair right hand to kiss; and then, arm in arm with his high Danish friend, he walked out of the hall.

XIII

While Froda's cure was proceeding, Edwald, impatient till it were completed, went out now and then, while the evening was darkening down deep and silent over him, and walked on the flowery terrace under Hildegardis' window, singing graceful little dainty songs, which the maidens of the Princess learned from him, and often repeated.

About this time it happened, that one night when the two friends were together, a man who occupied the post of Writer to the old Duke, Hildegardis' guardian, and who reckoned himself a very knowing person, paid them a visit; for the purpose, as he said, of making them an humble proposal.

The short account of the business was this: That as it was impossible for Froda to do any good with victory, he should take his opportunity, in the approaching Tournament, and quietly fall from his horse; in which wise, he might with certainty secure to his companion the hand of the bride, and at the same time gratify the Imperial will, a thing that could not but turn to good profit for himself in many senses.

At this the two friends in the first place laughed very heartily together; then Froda stept up to the Writer, and said, with great seriousness: "Thee, little mannikin, the old Duke, if he knew thy foolish talk, would, in all likelihood, pack out of his service, not once to mention the Imperial will. But there is a proverb you must get by heart:

When knight with knight hath rode to the lists,
The time is gone for talking of jests;
When knight on knight in the course must dash,
No king or kaiser can stay the clash;
And who pokes his nose in their knightly fray,
He has wish'd his nose from that hour good-day.

"And so your servant, worthy sir! And assure yourself that Edwald and I will run at one another in truth of heart, with all the force that is in us."

The Writer vanished from the chamber in no small haste; and it is said that even next morning he looked exceedingly pale.

XIV

Soon after this, Froda had recovered; the course was again made ready as before, only that it was encircled by even a greater multitude of people; and, in the freshness of the clear dewy morning, the two heroes rode out solemnly together to the battle.

"Good Edwald," said Froda, in a low voice by the way, "prepare thyself beforehand; for this time, too, the victory will not be thine. On that red shining cloud stands Aslauga."

"May be," replied Edwald, with a still smile; "but, under the wreaths of her gold bower, Hildegardis is already beaming, and to-day is even there before us."

The knights took their places; the trumpets called, the course began; and truly Froda's prediction seemed about to be fulfilled; for as they rushed together, Edwald tottered in his seat, so that he let go the bridle, caught the mane with both hands, and not without great labour recovered his position; whilst his wild white horse scoured over the ground with ungovernable springs. Hildegardis also seemed to waver at this sight, but the youth at last tamed his steed, and the second course began.

Froda shot along the ground like a thunderbolt; all thought that the Duke's victory was utterly hopeless. But just at the instant of meeting, the bold Danish horse reared on end as if frightened; the rider swayed, his spear went by without hitting, and under Edwald's firm charge, both steed and knight rushed clanging to the ground, and lay there as if stupefied.

Edwald now did as Froda had done a short time before. In knightly wise, he continued for a space motionless on the spot, as if waiting whether any other adversary would dispute the victory with him: then he sprang from his horse, and flew to the help of his prostrated friend.

Eagerly he laboured to draw him from beneath his horse; and, ere long, Froda regained his senses, extricated himself, and also plucked up his steed. Then he raised his visor, and smiled on his conqueror with a face of warm friendliness, though it was somewhat pale. The latter bowed humbly, almost bashfully, and said: "Thou, my hero, thrown! And by me! I understand it not."

"She herself wished it," answered Froda, smiling. "But come now to thy lofty bride."

In loud triumph shouted the people, low bowed the knights and ladies, as the old Duke now advanced with the lovely pair, and at his bidding, under the wreaths of the gold bower, they fell into each other's arms with soft blushing.

That same day they were solemnly wedded in the chapel of the Castle, seeing Froda had so wished it. A far journey, he said, into another country, was at hand for him; and he could wish so much to be present at the nuptials of his friend before departing.

XV

The tapers were flaming clear in the arched halls of the Castle; Hildegardis had just quitted the arm of her lord, to lead off a dance with the old Duke, when Edwald beckoned to his brother-in-arms, and both walked out into the moonshiny garden.

"Ah! Froda, my high, lordly hero," said Edwald, after some pause; "wert thou but as happy as I! But thy look, earnest and thoughtful, fixes on the ground; or glows impatient skyward. It were unspeakable if thou hadst really

borne a secret longing in thy heart for Hildegardis; and I, foolish boy, had now, favoured in so incomprehensible a manner, stept in thy way."

"Be at ease, good Edkin," smiled the Danish hero. "On the word of a knight, my thinking and longing is for another than thy fair Hildegardis. Aslauga's glancing gold figure beams in my heart more bright than ever. But hear what I have to tell thee.

"At the instant when we met in the course—O, had I words to express it!—I was overflowed, overshone, dazzled, blinded by Aslauga's gold locks, which came waving round me; and my noble horse must have seen them too; for I felt how he reared and started under me. Thee I no longer saw, the world no longer; nothing but Aslauga's angel face close by me, smiling, blooming like a flower in the sea of sunshine which floated round it. My senses failed me; I knew not where I was till thou wert lifting me from beneath the horse; and then, too, in great joy, I saw that it was her own kind will which had struck me to the ground. But a strange exhaustion lay over me, far more than the mere fall could have caused; and I, at the same time, felt as if my mistress must, of a surety, soon send me forth on a far mission. I hastened to my chamber to rest, and immediately a deep sleep fell on me. Then came Aslauga to my dreams, more royally adorned than ever; she entered, sat down by the head of my couch, and said: 'Haste, array thee in all the pomp of thy silver armour, for thou art not a marriage guest only, thou art also the——' And before the word was spoken, she had melted away like a dream; and I felt great haste to fulfil her command, and was rejoiced in heart. But now, even in the middle of the festival, I seem to myself so solitary as I never was before, and cannot cease thinking what the unfinished speech of my mistress could have meant."

"Thou art of far higher soul, Froda, than I," said Edwald, after a short silence; "and I cannot soar after thee in thy joys. Tell me, however, has a deep sadness never seized

thee, that thou shouldst serve so distant a mistress; alas! a mistress who is almost ever hidden from thee?"

"No, Edwald; not so," answered Froda, with eyes gleaming rapture. "I know still that she despises not my service; nay, there are times when she deigns to show herself before me. O! I am a happy, too happy knight and singer."

"And yet thy silence to-day, thy troubled musing?"

"Not troubled, dear Edkin; but so inward, so deep from the heart, and so strangely unaccountable, withal. But this, too, like everything I feel or encounter, comes all from the words and commands of Aslauga. How can it fail, then, to be something beautiful, and to lead to some high mark?"

A squire, who had hastened after them, gave notice that the ducal bridegroom was staid for in the torch-dance; and Edwald, in returning, desired his friend to take his place in the stately ceremony next to him and Hildegardis. Froda assented, with a friendly nod.

XVI

The horns and hautboys were already raising their stately tones: Edwald hastened to offer his hand to his fair bride; and whilst he walked with her to the middle of the gay floor, Froda was requesting of the noble dame nearest him, not heeding farther who she was, to rise with him for the torch-dance; and, on her consent, the two took their place next the married pair.

But what were his feelings when a light began to gleam from his partner, before which the torch in his left hand lost its brightness! Scarcely did he dare, in sweet awe-struck hope, to turn his eyes on the dame; and when at last he did so, his boldest wishes and longings were fulfilled. Adorned in a shining bridal-crown of precious stones, Aslauga, in solemn loveliness, was dancing beside him, and beaming on him from amid the sunny splendour of her gold hair, with enrapturing looks.

The amazed spectators could not turn an eye from the mysterious pair: the hero in his silver mail, with the uplifted torch in his hand, pacing on, earnest and joyful, with measured tread; his mistress beside him, rather floating than stepping, and from her golden locks raying forth such brightness, that you might have thought the day was peering in through the night; and where a look could penetrate through all this beamy glory to her face, entrancing heart and sense with the unutterably blissful smile of her eyes and mouth.

Towards the end of the dance, she bent towards Froda, and whispered with a kind, trustful air; and with the last tones of the horns and hautboys, she had disappeared.

No one of the curious onlookers had the courage to question the Northman about his partner; Hildegardis did not seem to have observed her. But shortly before the end of the festival, Edwald approached his friend, and asked in a whisper: "Was it—?"—"Yes, dear youth," answered Froda, "thy marriage-dance has been glorified by the presence of the purest beauty that was ever seen in any land. Ah! and if I understood her whisper rightly, thou shalt not any more behold me sighing and languishing on this clayey Earth. But I dare scarcely hope it. Now, good-night, dear Edkin, good-night So soon as I may, I will tell thee all."

XVII

Light, gay morning dreams were still flitting round Edwald's head; when all at once he thought a clear splendour shone over him. He remembered Aslauga; but it was Froda, whose gold helm of locks was now beaming with a no less sunny brightness than Aslauga's flowing hair. "Ha," thought Edwald in his dream, "how has my beloved brother grown so fair!" And Froda said to him: "I will sing thee somewhat, Edkin; low, quite low, that Hildegardis may not awaken. Listen to me:

"She came in her brightness, fair as day,
To where in his sleep her true Knight lay:
She held in her small and light-white hand,
A plaything, a glancing moon-gold band;
She wound it about his hair and her own,
Still singing the while: We two are one!
All round them the world lay poor and dim,
She mounts in her sheen aloft with him:
He stood in a garden sweet and bright,
The Angels do name it: Land of Light."

"So finely thou hast never in thy life sung before," said the dreaming youth.

"That I well believe, Edkin," said Froda, smiling, and vanished.

But Edwald continued dreaming, dreaming; and many other visions passed before him, all of a lovely cast, though he could not recollect them, when far in the morning he opened his smiling eyes. Froda and his mysterious song alone stood clear before his memory. He now saw well that his friend was dead; but he sorrowed not because of it in his mind, feeling, as he did, that the pure heart of the hero and singer could nowhere find its proper joy, save in the Land of Light, in blissful communion with the high spirits of the ancient time. He glided softly from his sleeping Hildegardis, into the chamber of the departed. He was lying on his bed of rest, almost as beautiful as he had looked in the vision; and the gold helmet on his head was entwisted in a wondrous, beaming lock of hair. Then Edwald made a fair shady grave on consecrated ground; summoned the Castle Chaplain, and with his help interred in it his heroic Froda.

As he returned, Hildegardis awoke. Astonished at his look of solemn, humble cheerfulness, she inquired where he had been, and with a smile he answered: "I have been burying the body of my beloved Froda, who has last night passed away to his gold-haired mistress." Thereupon he told Hildegardis the whole history of Aslauga's Knight; and continued in undisturbed mild joy, though for some time after this, a little stiller than formerly.

He was often to be found sitting at his friend's grave, singing this little song to his cithern:

Aslauga's Knight,
Fair is the dance
Where Angels glance,
And stars do sound the measure!
On earthly fight,
Through change and chance,
To guide us right,
Send down thy light,
Thy heart's undying treasure.

LUDWIG ACHIM VON ARNIM

(1781–1837)

THE MAD VETERAN OF FORT RATONNEAU

(Translated by WILLIAM METCALFE)

COUNT DURANDE, the good old commandant of Marseilles, sat shivering alone one cold, stormy, October evening by the ill-fitted stove of his handsome commandant's quarters, and kept drawing closer and closer to the fire, while the carriages rumbled past in the street to a great ball, and his servant, Basset, who was also his favourite companion, snored vigorously in the ante-room. "Even in the south of France, it is not always warm," the old gentleman thought, and shook his head, "nor yet do people remain always young there. But the gay whirl of society takes as little thought for age as architecture does for winter." What would he, the commander of all the veterans who in those days (during the Seven Years' War) formed the garrison of Marseilles and its forts, make of himself at the ball with his wooden leg? Not even the lieutenants of his regiment were of any use at a dance. Whereas here, at the fireside, his wooden leg seemed to his mind extremely useful, since he could not waken Basset, for pushing the supply of green olive-branches which he had got placed beside him into the flames bit by bit. Such a fire has a great charm; the sputtering flame is, as it were, interwoven with the green leafage; half on fire, half green, the leaves look like enamoured hearts. It reminded even the old gentleman of youthful brilliance, and caused him to become absorbed in the construction of fireworks such as

once on a day he had devised for the Court, and to speculate on new and even more complicated combinations of colours and movements with which he meant to surprise the Marseillese on the King's birthday. Things seemed emptier now in his head than at the ball. But in the joy of success, as he already saw everything sparkle, whizz, crackle, then all again light up in silent vastness, he had been pushing more and more olive-branches into the fire, and had not noticed that his wooden leg had caught fire, and that a good third of it was already burnt off. It was only when he tried to jump up as the grand finale, the discharge of a thousand rockets, carried away and inflamed his imagination, that he noticed, through collapsing in his easy-chair, that his wooden leg had become shorter, and that even what was left was alarmingly on fire. In his necessity, unable to stand upright, he thrust his chair back into the middle of the room, like a hand-sledge, with his blazing leg, and called first for his servant, and then for water. At that moment a woman ran with eager bustle to his aid, who had been shown into the room, and had been endeavouring for a long time to attract the commandant's attention by an apologetic cough, but without success. She tried to extinguish the fire with her apron, but the glowing charcoal of the leg set the apron on fire, and the commandant cried, now in real necessity, for help, for people to come. These soon rushed in from the street, even Basset was awakened; the burning foot, the burning apron set them all a-laughing; but with the first bucket of water which Basset fetched from the kitchen everything was extinguished, and the people took their leave. The poor woman was dripping wet, and she took some time to get over her fright. The commandant had her covered with his warm roquelaure, and offered her a glass of strong wine. But the woman would not take anything, she only sobbed about her trouble, and asked the commandant to be allowed to say a few words with him in private. So he dismissed his careless servant, and seated himself cauti-

ously beside her. "Alas, my husband!" she said in a strange, German sort of French. "My husband will be out of his mind when he hears this story; alas my poor husband, here's another trick the Devil is playing him, to be sure!" The commandant asked what about her husband, and she told him that it was just her dear husband that she had come to him about, to present a letter from the colonel of the Picardy regiment. The commandant put on his spectacles, recognised his friend's crest, and skimmed the note, then he said, "So you are the Rosalie, maiden name Lilie, of Leipzig, who married Sergeant Francœur when he lay a prisoner at Leipzig with a wound in his head? Tell me about it! It is a remarkable love story! What were your parents? Did they not put obstacles in your way? And what sort of merry crotchets has your husband got from the wound in his head, that they make him unfit for active service, although he was reckoned the bravest and most capable sergeant, and the soul of the regiment?"—"Your Honour," replied the woman, again overcome by her grief, "my love is to blame for all his misfortune—it is I who have made my husband unfortunate, and not the wound; my love has brought the Devil upon him to plague him and drive him out of his senses. Instead of putting the soldiers through their drill, he sometimes begins to show them great leaps, to which the Devil prompts him, and expects them to repeat them after him; or he pulls faces at them which make them tremble in every limb, and expects them for all that not to move a muscle; and recently, what proved the last straw, when during a skirmish the general in command gave the order for the regiment to retire, he pushed him off his horse, got on it himself, and captured the battery with the regiment."—"A brick of a fellow!" shouted the commandant, "if only such a Devil drove all our generals, we should not need to fear a second Rosbach; if that's the sort of Devil's work your love does, I only wish you were in love with our whole army."—"But unfortunately my mother's

curse is on it," sighed the woman. "I never knew my father. My mother had many visitors, whom I had to wait on, that was my only occupation. I was a dreamer and paid no attention whatever to the friendly addresses of those men; my mother protected me from their importunities. The war dispersed most of the gentlemen who used to visit my mother and gamble secretly in her house; we lived very neglected, much to her annoyance; friend and foe alike were hated by her on that account; I dared not give a thing to those who passed by our house wounded or hungry. That made me very sorry, and one day I was all alone preparing our dinner, when a lot of wagons passed by with wounded, whom I knew by their speech to be Frenchmen captured by the Prussians. I wished and wished to go down to them with the food that I had prepared, yet I feared my mother; but, when I saw Francœur lying in the last wagon with his head bandaged, I don't know what came over me; my mother was forgotten, I took soup and a spoon, and, without shutting up the house, ran after the wagon as far as Pleissenburg. I found him; he had got down by that time. I addressed myself boldly to the ward-master, and soon managed to get the wounded man the best straw bed there was. And, when he was laid there, what bliss to hand the warm soup to the man in his need! His eyes sparkled, and he declared that I had a radiance about my head. I answered that it was my head-dress which had opened out during my hurried attentions to him. He said that the radiance proceeded from my eyes! Ah, I could not get that speech out of my mind. If he had not had my heart already, I should have had to give it to him in return for that."—"A true speech, and a pretty speech!" said the commandant,—and Rosalie continued, "That was the best hour of my life; I gazed at him more and more eagerly, for he declared that it did him good, and, when at length he put a little ring on my finger, I felt richer than I had ever felt before. This happy silence was broken by the entrance of my mother

scolding and cursing; I cannot repeat what she called me, although I was not ashamed, for I knew that I was innocent, and that he would not believe any evil of me. She wanted to drag me away, but he held me fast and told her that we were betrothed and that I already wore his ring. How my mother's face was distorted! It seemed to me as if flames issued from her throat, and her eyes turned up till nothing but the whites could be seen, she cursed me and committed me solemnly and in so many words to the Devil. A bright light had sparkled in my eyes that morning when I saw Francœur, but now it was as if a black bat had covered my eyes with the dim web of its wings; the world was half concealed from me, and I was no longer quite mistress of myself. My heart was in despair, yet I had to laugh. 'You hear, the Devil is laughing out of you already!' my mother said, and went away triumphantly, while I fell down in a swoon. When I came to myself, I did not dare go to her and leave the wounded man, upon whom the scene had had a bad effect; indeed, in my own heart I was indignant at my mother for the harm she had done the poor soul. It was three days before I slipped home, in the evening, without telling Francœur. I dared not knock; at last a woman who had been servant to us came out and informed me that my mother had sold off her things in a hurry and gone away with a strange gentleman, who was said to be a gambler, no one knew whither. So I was now cast off by everybody, and I was quite pleased to have no one else to consider, and to fall into the arms of my Francœur. Even my girl-friends in the town would have no more to do with me, so I could live entirely for him and his comfort. I worked for him; till then I had merely played with the lace-bobbins for my own adornment, now I was not ashamed to sell my handiwork, it procured comfort and refreshment for him. But I could never dismiss my mother from my thoughts, except when his vivacity diverted me with his stories; my mother appeared to my imaginations, black, with

flaming eyes, always cursing, and I could not get rid of her. I did not wish to say anything to my Francœur lest I should distress him; I complained of headache, which I had not, of toothache, which I did not feel, so as to be able to weep as I needed. Ah, if I had taken him into my confidence then, I should not have caused his unhappiness; but every time I tried to tell him that I believed I was possessed by the Devil because of my mother's curse, the Devil shut my mouth. I was afraid, too, that if I told him, he might cease to love me; he might abandon me, and the mere thought was almost more than I could survive. This inward torment, perhaps also over-work, ended by wrecking my health; violent convulsions, which I concealed from him, threatened to suffocate me, and medicine only seemed to make the trouble worse. Scarcely was he cured, when he arranged for our marriage. An old clergyman delivered a solemn address, in which he impressed upon my Francœur what I had done for him, how I had sacrificed country and comfort and friends for his sake, and even drawn down my mother's curse upon myself; all this trouble he must share with me, must bear all misfortune in partnership. My husband shuddered at the words, but still he uttered an unmistakable Yes, and we were wedded. The first weeks were blissful, I felt myself relieved of half my sufferings, and did not guess at the time that half the curse had been transferred to my husband. But soon he began to complain that the preacher in his black robe was always before his eyes and menacing him, so that he conceived such a violent wrath and aversion to clergy, churches, and sacred images, that he was forced to curse them, he knew not why, and, to get relief from those notions, he abandoned himself to every whim, he danced and drank, and in the quickened circulation of his blood he felt better. I attributed it all to his imprisonment, although I had a strong suspicion, that it was the Devil who was plaguing him. He was exchanged through the good offices of his colonel, who had missed him badly in the regiment, for

Francœur is above the ordinary run of soldiers. With light hearts we set out from Leipzig, and in our conversations pictured a happy future. But scarcely had we passed from our lack of everyday necessities to the comfort of the well-provided army in its winter-quarters, when my husband's violence began to increase day by day. He beat a drum all day long to divert himself, he squabbled and got into quarrels. The colonel could not understand him; only with myself was he gentle as a child. I was brought to bed of a boy when the campaigning season opened again, and, with my birth-pangs, the Devil who had been plaguing me seemed to be entirely charmed away. Francœur continually became more eccentric and violent. The colonel wrote to me that he was as foolhardy as a maniac, but had so far always been fortunate; his comrades declared that he was sometimes off his head, and he feared he would have to relegate him to the hospital or to the veterans. The colonel had some regard for me, he listened to my intercessions, until at last Francœur's violence to the general commanding the division, which I have already related, caused his arrest, on which the surgeon declared that he was suffering from insanity in consequence of the wounds in his head, which had been neglected during his captivity, and must spend at least a couple of years in a warmer climate with the veterans, to see whether the trouble would perhaps leave him. What was said to him was that he was being put among the veterans as a punishment for his escapade, and he took leave of the regiment with curses. I begged the colonel to give me this note, and resolved to tell you all about it in confidence, so that he might not be judged according to the rigour of the law, but according to his misfortune, the only cause of which is my love, and that for his good you might station him in some small, remote place, so that he may not become the talk of the people in this great city. But, honoured sir, a woman who has done you a little service to-day may now venture to request your word of honour to keep inviolate this

secret of his infirmity, which he has no suspicion of himself, and which would be revolting to his pride."—"My hand upon it!" cried the commandant, who had listened with approval to the eager woman, "and, what is more, I'll listen to your petition three times if Francœur plays any silly tricks. But it will be best to prevent them, and so I'll send him at once as a relief to a fort which needs only three of a garrison. You will find a comfortable abode there for yourself and your child, he will have little opportunity for follies, and any he may commit can be kept quiet." The woman thanked him for his kind interest, and kissed the old gentleman's hand, in return for which he lighted her as she descended the stairs with many curtseys. This amazed his old servant Basset, and he began to rack his brains over what could have happened to his old master; could he actually have conceived a passion for the inflammable lady, which might prove prejudicial to his own influence? Now the old gentleman had a habit, when he could not sleep, of reflecting aloud in his bed at night upon all that had happened during the day, as if he must confess himself to his bed. So now, when the carriages were rattling back from the ball and keeping him awake, Basset hung about in the other room, and heard the whole conversation, which he found all the more interesting that Francœur belonged to the same district and same regiment as himself, although he was much older than Francœur. He at once remembered of a monk whom he knew, who had already cast the Devil out of many persons, and to whom he resolved to take Francœur soon; he had a great fondness for quacks, and was delighted at the prospect of seeing a devil cast out once more. Rosalie, greatly relieved by the success of her visit, had slept well; in the morning she bought a new apron, and, arrayed in it, went to meet her husband, who was leading his wearied veterans into town with horrible songs. He kissed her, lifted her into the air, and said, "You smell of the burning of Troy, I clasp you again, fair Helen!" Rosalie changed colour, and thought

it as well to inform him, when he asked, that she had been to the commandant's about their quarters, that he had had his leg literally on fire, and that her apron had been burnt. He took amiss that she had not waited until his arrival, yet he forgot it in a thousand jokes about the burning apron. He thereupon presented his men to the commandant, and praised all their bodily defects and spiritual virtues so aptly, that he won the good will of the old gentleman, who thought to himself:—"His wife loves him, but she is a German and does not understand a Frenchman; a Frenchman has always a touch of the Devil in him!" He had him come in to his room, to make his closer acquaintance, found him well instructed in fortification methods, and, what still more enchanted him, he found in him an enthusiastic pyrotechnist, who had executed all sorts of fireworks when he was with the regiment. The commandant told him about his new invention for a firework display on the King's Birthday, at which the leg-burning had disturbed him the previous day, and Francœur entered into it with sparkling enthusiasm. The old gentleman now informed him, that he, with two other veterans, was to relieve the little garrison of Fort Ratonneau, that there was a great powder-store there, and that there he with his two soldiers were industriously to fill rockets, twist Catherine-wheels, and tie crackers. While handing him the key of the powder-tower and the inventory, the commandant remembered what his wife had said, and kept the key in his hands, saying, "But surely you will not be plagued by the Devil and cause me trouble?" "Oh, talk of the Devil and he appears!" answered Francœur with a certain assurance. That gave the commandant confidence, he handed him the key, the inventory, and the order to the small garrison in occupation to withdraw. So he was dismissed, and in the lobby Basset fell upon his neck; they had recognised each other simultaneously, and related to each other in all brevity, how things had fared with them. But, as Francœur was accustomed to great strictness in every-

thing military, he tore himself away and invited him for the next Sunday, if he could get away, to Fort Ratonneau, as guest of its commandant, which he himself had the honour to be.

The entry into the fort was for all alike welcome: the retiring veterans had enjoyed the beautiful prospect upon Marseilles, even to superfluity, and the incomers were enchanted over the prospect, over the neat works, over the comfortable rooms and beds; moreover they purchased from the retiring veterans a few goats, a pair of pigeons, a dozen fowls, and the contrivances for stalking any game in the neighbourhood, for soldiers with leisure are hunters by nature. When Francœur had entered on his command, he immediately ordered the two soldiers, Brunet and Tessier, to open the powder-tower with him and to go through the inventory with a view to conveying a supply into the laboratory for firework-making. The inventory was correct, and he at once set one of his soldiers to prepare for making fireworks; with the other he went round all the cannon and mortars, to polish up the brass ones and paint the iron ones black. That done, he filled a sufficient supply of bombs and grenades, and also arranged all the pieces in position to sweep the only access to the fort. "The fort cannot be taken!" he exclaimed again and again in enthusiasm. "I will hold the fort, even if the English with a hundred thousand men land and attack it! But things were in a mess here!" —"It is like this everywhere on the forts and batteries," said Tessier; "the old commandant cannot climb so far now with his wooden leg, and, God be praised, it has not yet occurred to the English to make a landing."—"That must be changed," exclaimed Francœur, "I would rather burn my tongue out than allow our enemies to lay Marseilles in ashes, or admit that we need be afraid of them."

His wife was made to help him to clear the masonry of grass and moss, to whitewash it, and to air the stores in the casemates. In those first days there was scarcely any sleep,

so hard did the indefatigable Francœur drive them, and in that time his deft hand accomplished as much as would have taken another a full month. Amid this bustle his crotchets left him in peace; he was in a hurry, but all to a definite goal; and Rosalie blessed the day which had brought him to this upper region of the air, where the Devil appeared to have no power over him. The weather, too, had become warmer and brighter owing to a change of wind, so that a second summer appeared to be welcoming them; every day ships sailed in and out of the harbour, to salute and be saluted by the forts on shore. Rosalie, who had never been to the sea, thought herself translated to another world, and her boy, after so much irksome confinement in wagons and inns, enjoyed the full liberty in the little enclosed garden of the fort, which the former occupants, after the fashion of soldiers, especially artillerymen, had adorned with the most elaborate geometrical designs in boxwood; above it waved the flag with the lilies, the pride of Francœur, a sign rich in blessing to his wife, who was Lilie by name, and the best-loved diversion of the child. So it came round to the first Sunday, blessed day to all, and Francœur ordered his wife to prepare something good for his dinner, at which he expected his friend Basset; in particular, he made a request for a good omelette, for the hens of the fort were laying industriously, and he also deposited some wildfowl in the kitchen which Brunet had shot. In the midst of these preparations, Basset arrived puffing and blowing, and was enchanted with the transformation effected in the fort; informed himself, on the commandant's behalf, as to the fireworks, and was astonished at the large number of rockets and Roman candles already made. The wife now went off to her occupations in the kitchen, the two soldiers went out to get fruit for the dessert. All were determined to make a right good feast of it that day, and to discuss the gazette which Basset had brought with him. Basset now sat *tête-à-tête* with Francœur in the garden, and stared at him

in silence; the latter asked him why he did so. "I am thinking that you look as well as ever you did, and that everything you do is so sensible."—"Who doubts it?" asked Francœur with rising temper. "That's what I'd like to know!" Basset tried to evade the question, but there was something terrifying in Francœur's manner, his dark eyes blazed, his head was held high, his lips compressed. Poor, tattling Basset's heart failed him in a moment; he spoke in a thin voice like a cracked fiddle of rumours which were floating about at the commandant's to the effect that Francœur was possessed by the Devil, and of his own good intention to have him exorcised by a regular cleric, Father Philip, whom he had induced to come before dinner on the pretext of saying Mass in the little chapel for the garrison who were so far away from a church. Francœur was beside himself at the news, he swore he would have a bloody revenge on whoever had uttered such lies about him; he knew nothing about the Devil; there might be no such person for all he knew, for he never in his life had had the honour of making his acquaintance. Basset declared that he was not to blame in the least: he had overheard the story when the commandant was talking aloud to himself, and also that this Devil was the cause of Francœur's leaving the regiment. "And who informed the commandant?" asked Francœur, quivering. "Your wife," answered Basset, "but with the best intention, in order to excuse you, if you play any wild pranks here."—"We are done with each other!" cried Francœur, and beat upon his head. "She has betrayed me, ruined me, has secrets with the commandant; she has done and suffered no end for me, she has caused me no end of trouble, I am quits with her, we have done with each other!" Gradually he became calmer to appearance, while he became more agitated inwardly; he could see the black clergyman before his eyes again, just as those bitten by a mad dog imagine they always see the dog, when Father Philip entered the garden, at which he went forward

sharply to ask what he wanted. The Father imagined that he ought to apply his powers of exorcisation, and addressed the Devil sharply, all the time waving his hands over Francœur in the sign of the Cross. This irritated Francœur; as commandant of the fort he ordered him to quit the place immediately. But the horrified Philip bestirred himself all the more vehemently against the Devil in Francœur, and, when he actually lifted his staff, the threat was more than Francœur's military pride could brook. With the strength of madness, he caught the little Philip by his frock and threw him over the iron gate that guarded the entrance, and had not the good man remained hanging by his frock from the pointed bars of the gate, he would have got a bad fall down the stone steps. Near this gate, the table had been set, which reminded Francœur of dinner. He shouted for it, and it was brought by Rosalie, rather heated with the fire, but very happy, for she did not observe the monk on the other side of the gate, who had scarcely recovered from his first fright, and was praying inwardly to avert further peril. She scarcely observed, either, that her husband and Basset were looking down at the table, the one blackly, the other in embarrassment She asked after the two soldiers, but Francœur said, "They can take their dinner afterwards, I am so hungry I could devour the world." At that she served the soup, and out of politeness gave Basset the most, then she went to the kitchen to fry the omelette. "And how did my wife please the commandant?" asked Francœur.—"Very well," answered Basset; "he wished that he had fared as well in his captivity as you did."—"He shall have her," he answered. "She asked about the two soldiers who are absent, but she did not ask what *I* wanted; she tried to make up to you because you are the commandant's servant; that's why she filled your plate until it ran over, and offered you the biggest glass of wine; just watch, she'll bring you the biggest helping of omelette too! If she does, I'll not stand it; she can just go about her

business and leave me here alone." Basset was about to reply, but at that moment the wife came with the omelette. She had already cut it in three, went to Basset and put a piece on his plate with the words, "You won't get a better omelette at the commandant's, you must put in a good word for me!" Francœur looked blackly at the dish, the gap was almost as big as the two remaining pieces put together. He got up and said, "There's no help for it, we have done with each other!" With these words he went to the powder-tower, opened the iron door, went in and shut it behind him. His wife looked after him in dismay, and let the dish fall. "Good God! The Evil One is tormenting him again; I hope he won't do a mischief in the powder-tower."—"Is that the powder-tower?" shouted Basset. "He'll blow himself sky-high! Save yourself and your child!" With these words he hastened out, and the monk did not venture inside again, but rushed after him. Rosalie hastened into the house for her child, snatched him from sleep, out of his cradle. She no longer knew what she was about; unconsciously, as when she had once followed Francœur, she now fled away from him with her child, and said to herself, "Child, I'm doing this for your sake, for myself it would be better to die along with him; Hagar, thou didst not suffer like me, for I am casting out myself." Absorbed in such thoughts, she took the wrong road down the hill, and was brought to a halt on the swampy shore of the river. She could go no farther for weariness, and so seated herself in a boat which was drawn up only a little way on the beach, and thus easy to push off, and let herself drift down the river; she dared not look about her; when there was a shot in the harbour, she thought the fort was blown up, and the better half of her life lost, so she gradually fell into a dazed, feverish condition.

Meanwhile the two soldiers, laden with apples and grapes, had arrived at the neighbourhood of the fort, but Francœur's powerful voice shouted to them, "Back!" while

he fired a bullet from a flint-lock over their heads. Then he said through the speaking-trumpet, "I am willing to parley with you from the High Wall, I am the sole person in authority here, and I mean to live alone here so long as the Devil pleases!" They did not know what this all meant, but there was nothing for it but to obey the sergeant's will. They went down to the steep scarp of the fort which was called the High Wall, and scarcely had they got there when they saw Rosalie's bed and the child's cradle being let down by a rope; after them came their own beds and belongings, and Francœur shouted through the speaking-trumpet, "Take your things, take my runaway wife's bed and cradle and clothes to the commandant's, you'll find her there; say to her, 'Satan sends you these, and this old flag, to cover your and the commandant's shame!'" With that he flung down the great French flag which had waved over the fort, and continued, "I hereby declare war against the commandant, he may make his preparations until evening, then I shall open fire; let him not spare; for, by the Devil, I will not spare him; he may put out all his hands, but he shan't catch me; he has given me the key of the powder-tower, I will make use of it, and, when he thinks he has got me, I'll fly with it to heaven, and from heaven to hell. That will raise a dust!" At last Brunet ventured to speak, and shouted up, "Think of our most gracious King, he is your sovereign, surely you won't resist him?" To him Francœur answered, "In me is the King of all the kings of this world, in me is the Devil, and in the Devil's name I command you speak not a word, or I'll smash you in pieces!" After this threat the two packed their belongings together in silence and let the other things lie; they were aware that there were great heaps of stones piled up above, which could shatter everything at the foot of the scarp. When they reached the commandant in Marseilles, they found him already astir, for Basset had told him everything; he sent the two new arrivals back to the fort with a cart to secure

the wife's belongings against the rain which was threatening; others he despatched to find the woman and her child, while he himself assembled his officers to discuss what was to be done. The principal anxiety of this council of war was about the loss of the fine fort, if it should chance to be blown into the air; but soon a messenger came from the city, where the rumour had spread, to represent that the destruction of the best quarter of the town was quite inevitable. It was generally recognised that they could not proceed to forcible measures, for there was no honour to be gained against one man, but, on the contrary, enormous loss might be avoided by a show of concession; sleep was sure to overcome Francœur's madness ultimately, then they would send resolute men to scale the fort and take him prisoner. Scarcely had this resolution been taken, when the two soldiers were introduced, who had brought back Rosalie's beds and household stuff. They had a message from Francœur to deliver, to the effect that the Devil had informed him that they proposed to capture him in his sleep, but, out of love for certain Devil's comrades who were to be employed on that duty, he warned them not to attempt it, for he would sleep comfortably locked up in his powder-tower with loaded weapons, and, long before they could break in the door, he would be awake and the tower blown up with one shot into the powder-kegs. "He is right," said the commandant, "he cannot do otherwise; we must starve him out."—"He got our whole stock of provisions for the winter sent up," Brunet remarked, "we must wait half a year at least. He said too that the ships which sail past with supplies to the city would have to pay him a rich toll, or else he would sink them to the bottom, and to show that no one dare sail at night without his consent, he would let a few balls whizz across the river by night."—"Sure enough, he's shooting!" cried one of the officers, and all rushed to an upstairs window. What a spectacle! At every angle of the fort the cannon opened their fiery throats, the

balls whizzed through the air, in the town the mob was rushing to cover with cries, and only a few cared to exhibit their courage by looking on boldly at the danger. But these were amply rewarded, for, in a blaze of light, Francœur sent off a bundle of rockets into the air from a howitzer, and a bundle of Roman candles out of a mortar, which he followed by countless others discharged from muskets. The commandant averred that the effect was excellent, he himself had never ventured to throw fireworks into the air from artillery, but he must admit that it rendered the display, so to speak, meteoric, in fact, Francœur almost deserved to obtain his pardon for the idea.

This nocturnal illumination had another effect, which certainly no one ever intended; it saved the lives of Rosalie and her child. Both had been sent to sleep by the gentle motion of the boat, and Rosalie dreamed that she saw her mother glowing and devoured with inward flames, and asked her why she suffered such torments. Then it was as if a loud voice shouted in her ears, "My curse consumes me and thee, and, if thou canst not break it, I shall remain a prey to all manner of evil." She would have said more, but Rosalie woke up with a start, saw the bundle of Roman candles at its brightest overhead, and heard a sailor beside her call out, "Port, or we'll run down a boat with a woman and a child in it!" And at that moment the prow of a great barge came tearing through the water behind her like the open jaws of a whale, then it turned to port, but too late, her skiff was capsized. "Help my poor child!" she cried, and a boat-hook pulled her aboard the larger vessel, which cast anchor soon afterwards. "If the fireworks had not been sent off from Fort Ratonneau," said the only sailor, "I should not have seen you, and without meaning you any harm, we should have sunk you. How do you come to be so late on the water alone! Why did you not give us a shout?" Rosalie rapidly answered his questions, and begged him urgently to take her to the commandant's

house. Out of pity the sailor gave her his boy to show her the way.

She found everything in a turmoil at the commandant's; she begged him to keep in mind his promise that he would pardon her husband for three offences. He said that his promise did not apply to such an offence as this, he had meant complaints about jokes and crotchets, but this was devilish earnest.—"Well, the fault is on your side," said the wife firmly, for she felt that she was no longer deserted by fate. "Why, I told you all about the poor man's condition, and yet you trusted him in such a dangerous post; you vowed secrecy to me, and yet you told the whole story to Basset, your servant, and it is he with his silly cleverness and smartness who has got us into all this trouble, not my poor husband; but *you* are to blame for it all, *you* will have to account for it to the king!"—The commandant defended himself against the charge of having said anything to Basset; the latter confessed that he had listened to his master when talking to himself, and so the whole blame was laid upon his soul. The old man declared that he would let himself be shot dead before the fort next day and expiate his offence against his king with his life, but Rosalie begged him not to be too hasty; he must remember that she had got him out of a fix once already. She was installed in a room in the commandant's house, and she put her child to sleep, while she communed with herself and implored God to suggest how she could manage to deliver her mother from the flames and her husband from the curse. But while on her knees she sank into a deep sleep, and when morning came she was not aware of any dream or suggestion. The commandant, who had already made an early attempt upon the fort, came back dejected. True, he had not lost any men, but Francœur had shot so many balls to right and left and overhead of them with such skill, that they owed their lives entirely to his forbearance. He had blocked the river by signal-shots, even on the high-road no one dared go about, in short, all

communication with the city was arrested for the day, and the city was threatening that, if the commandant did not proceed cautiously, but meditated laying siege to Francœur as if they were in an enemy's country, it would call out the citizens and make short work of the veterans.

Accordingly, the commandant held his hand for three days; every evening was gorgeous with a display of fireworks; every evening Rosalie reminded him of his promise of pardon. The third evening he told her that the assault was fixed for the next day at noon, the city had agreed to it, since all traffic was disorganised and a famine might result. He himself was to storm the entrance, while another party tried to scale the walls unobserved from the other side, and so perhaps take her husband in the rear before he had time to rush to the powder-tower. It would cost men, the result was uncertain; but he wished to clear himself of the reproach of having through his weakness allowed a madman to conceive the crazy notion of setting a whole city at defiance; he would prefer the worst misfortune to this suspicion. He had tried to set his affairs in order with God and the world; Rosalie and her child would find that they had not been forgotten in his will. Rosalie fell at his feet and asked what the fate of her husband would be if he were captured in the assault. The commandant turned away his head and said in a low voice, "Death, inevitably; no court-martial would accept the plea of insanity; there is too much insight, foresight and cleverness in his whole conduct; the Devil cannot be had up before the court; he must suffer for him." After a storm of tears, Rosalie recovered herself, and inquired, what if she placed the fort in the commandant's hands without bloodshed and without danger, would his transgression then be pardoned as an act of frenzy? "Yes, I swear it!" the commandant exclaimed, "but it is no use; he hates you worst of all, and shouted to one of our outposts yesterday that he would surrender the fort if we could send him the head of his wife."—"I know him," she

said, " I will exorcise the Devil in him, I will give him peace, though I should die along with him, so it is only gain to me if I die by his hand, to which I am linked by the most sacred of vows." The commandant begged her to consider, and interrogated her as to what she meant to do, but did not resist her request, nor the hope that the inevitable ruin might thus be avoided.

Father Philip had found his way into the house, and related that the crazy Francœur had now unfurled a great white flag on which the Devil was depicted. The commandant, however, would hear none of his news, but bade him go to Rosalie, who wished to be confessed by him. After Rosalie had made her confession in all the tranquillity of a mind surrendered to God, she begged Father Philip to do her the favour of accompanying her, only as far as a protected rampart, where no ball could reach him, and where she wished to hand over her child and money for its upbringing, as she could not bring herself to part from the dear child just yet. He promised, with some hesitation, after he had satisfied himself in the house that he really would be safe from the cannon-balls, for he had quite lost faith in his power to cast out devils; he had come to it that what he had cast out hitherto might not have been the Devil after all, but an inferior sort of hobgoblin.

With many tears, Rosalie dressed her child once more in white with red ribbons, then took it on her arm, and went silently downstairs. At the foot, the old gentleman was standing; he could only press her hand, and had to turn away, for he was ashamed of his tears before the onlookers. So she went along the street, no one knowing her intentions; Father Philip kept a little in the rear, since he would gladly have been relieved of accompanying her; next followed the crowd of idle persons on the streets, who asked him what it meant. Many cursed Rosalie because she was Francœur's wife, but the curses did not trouble her.

While she was so engaged, the commandant led his men

by hidden routes to the places from which the assault was to be delivered, if the wife should prove unable to exorcise her husband's madness.

At the gate, the crowd promptly left Rosalie, for from time to time Francœur discharged shots across the open ground. Father Philip, too, complained that he was feeling faint and would need to lie down. Rosalie said it was a pity, and pointed to the rampart, where she meant to suckle her child once more and then roll it in her cloak; it could be sought for there, it would lie there quite safely, if she should not be able to return to it. Father Philip crouched behind the rocks and prayed, while Rosalie advanced with a firm step to the rampart, where she suckled her child, blessed it, wrapped it in her cloak and put it to sleep. Then she left it with a sigh which broke the clouds above her, so that the blue sky and cheering sunlight shone upon her. Now she became visible to her cruel husband as she emerged on the rampart, a light blazed out at the gate; a shock which almost sent her rolling over, a roaring in the air, a whizzing mingled with it told her that death had passed very near. But she was no longer afraid; an inward voice assured her that nothing could perish that had gone through that day, and the love she bore to her husband and to her child still stirred in her heart when she beheld her husband standing loading in front of her on the fortifications, and heard her child crying behind her; the two caused her more pain than her own danger, and the heaviness of the way was not the heaviest thing on her heart. And now a new discharge deafened her ears and spattered the stone-dust in her face; but she prayed and looked to Heaven. So she entered the narrow gorge, which, like a prolonged gun-barrel, was designed with malicious economy to concentrate the whole weight of the deadly discharge of two cannon loaded with grape-shot upon the attackers. "What are you looking at, woman!" roared Francœur. "Don't look up to the sky, your angels won't come; your Devil and your death are

here."—"Neither death nor Devil will divide me longer from you," she said fearlessly, and trod farther up the great steps. "Woman!" he cried, "you have more courage than the Devil, but it shall not help you." He blew on the linstock which had almost gone out; the sweat stood glistening on his forehead and cheeks; it was as if two natures were contending within him. And Rosalie did not wish to check the strife nor anticipate the time on which she was beginning to reckon. She advanced no farther, she knelt down on the stairs when she was three steps distant from the cannon, on the spot where their fire crossed. He tore open his tunic and vest at his bosom, to give himself breath, he clutched his black hair, which hung in wild locks, and tore it out in his frenzy. Thereupon the wound in his head opened under the wild rain of blows which he showered upon his forehead, tears and blood extinguished the burning match, a whirlwind swept the priming from the touch-holes of the cannon and the Devil's flag from the tower. "The chimney-sweeper retreats, he cries, 'Away to the chimney!'" he shouted, and covered his eyes. Then he came to himself, opened the grated door, tottered to his wife, raised her up, kissed her and finally said, "The black miner has worked his way through. The light shines into my head again, and the air is blowing through it, and love shall rekindle a fire so that we shall never be cold again. Good God, what mischief I have done! Let us lose no time, they will only give me a few hours' grace. Where is my child? I must kiss it while I am still at liberty. What is death? Was I not dead once already, when you left me, and now you come back, and your coming gives me more than your parting could take away, an unending sense of my being, of which moments suffice me. I should be content to live with you, even if your fault had been greater now than my desperation; but I know military law, and, praise God, I can now die in my right mind as a penitent Christian." In her rapture, almost suffocated by her tears, Rosalie could scarcely

manage to say that *he* was pardoned, that *she* was innocent, and that their child was close at hand. She hastily bound up his wound, then led him down the steps until he came to the rampart where she had left the child. There they found him with good Father Philip, who had crept up gradually to him under cover of the rocks, and the child let something fly from his hands as he stretched them out to his father. And, as all three were locked in one another's embrace, Father Philip related how a pair of doves had fluttered down from the tower and played tenderly with the child, let it handle them, and, as it were, comforted it in its loneliness. At the sight, he had found courage to go to the child. "They were, like good angels, my child's playmates in the fort, and loyally sought him out, they are sure to come back, and will not leave him." And in fact the doves did fly about them in a friendly way with green leaves in their bills. "Our sin is taken away," said Francœur, "never again will I grumble at peace; peace is so grateful to me."

Meanwhile, the commandant and his officers had come up, for he had witnessed the happy result through his telescope. Francœur handed him his sword; he informed Francœur that he was pardoned, seeing that his wound had deprived him of reason, and ordered a surgeon to examine the wound and bandage it better. Francœur sat down and submitted quietly to all that was done to him; he had eyes only for his wife and child. The surgeon was amazed that he gave no sign of pain; he extracted from the wound a splinter of bone which had caused suppuration around it; apparently Francœur's powerful constitution had been working uninterruptedly and gradually to expel it, until finally outward violence, in the shape of his own desperate hands, had broken a way for it through the outer membranes. The surgeon averred that, without this happy interference, an incurable madness must have consumed poor Francœur. To prevent injury from exertion, he was placed in a carriage, and his entry into Marseilles

amid a populace always better able to esteem valour than virtue resembled a triumphal procession; the women threw laurel-wreaths into the carriage, all thronged to make themselves familiar with the brave rascal who had lorded it over so many thousand men for three whole days. But the men presented their floral tributes to Rosalie and her child, and lauded her as their deliverer, and vowed to reward her and her child richly for rescuing their city from ruin.

After such a day it but seldom happens in *one* person's life to have another experience such as would be worth the trouble of relating, although it was only in those uneventful years that those who had recovered their happiness and escaped the curse came to realise the full extent of the happiness which they had attained. The good old commandant adopted Francœur as his son, and, though he could not transfer his name to him, still he left him a portion of his estate and his blessing. But what affected Rosalie even more intimately was a communication from Prague, which only reached her many years afterwards, in which a friend of her mother's informed her that, under the stress of consuming suffering, her mother had for fully a year repented her of the curse which she had laid upon her daughter, and had lingered in desire and longing for deliverance of body and soul, weary of herself and the world, until the day when Rosalie's fidelity and submission to God had been crowned with success. On that day, the letter said, having found peace through an inward light, she had fallen asleep blissfully, in believing acknowledgment of the Redeemer.

'Tis Grace removes the curse of sin,
'Tis Love that drives the Devil out.

ADELBERT VON CHAMISSO

(1781–1838)

PETER SCHLEMIHL

I

At last, after a fortunate, but to me most tedious passage, we reached our destined haven. As soon as the boat had landed me on the shore I loaded myself with my little possessions, and forcing my way through the swarming crowd, entered the meanest house distinguished by a sign-board. I ordered a chamber; they measured me with a glance, and sent me up to the garret. I ordered fresh water, and inquired for the abode of Mr. Thomas Jones. "Near the North gate, the first country house on the right-hand side; a large new house of red-and-white marble supported by many pillars." Well, it was yet early. I opened my bundle, laid out my newly-turned black coat, clad myself in my sprucest garments, put my letter of introduction into my pocket, and bent my way to the man who, I modestly hoped, was destined to befriend me.

After I had gone through the long North-street and reached the gate, I saw the columns glimmering through the green trees: "It is here, then," I thought. I wiped the dust from my feet with my pocket-handkerchief, arranged my cravat, and rang the bell. The door flew open; the servants narrowly examined me in the hall, but the porter at last announced me, and I had the honour to be summoned into the park, where Mr. Jones was walking with a small com-

pany. I knew him instantly by his portly self-complacency. He received me tolerably well—as a rich man is wont to receive a poor dependent devil; looked towards me, but without turning from the rest of the company, and took from me the letter I held in my hand. "Aye, aye! from my brother; I have not heard from him for a long time. Is he well? There," he continued, addressing the company without waiting for an answer, and pointed with the letter to a hill, "there I have ordered a new building to be erected." He broke the seal, but not the conversation, of which wealth became the subject. "He who is not the master of at least a million," he interposed, "is—forgive the expression—is a ragamuffin."—"That is true indeed," exclaimed I, with full, overflowing feeling. He must have been pleased with the expression of my concurrence, for he smiled on me, and said, "Remain here, young friend: I shall perhaps have time to tell you, by and bye, what I think of it." He pointed to the letter, put it into his pocket, and turned again to the company. He then offered his arm to a young lady; other gentlemen were busied with other fair ones; every one found some one to whom he attached himself, and they walked towards the rose-encircled hill.

I lingered idly behind, for not a soul deemed me worthy of notice. The company was extremely cheerful, jocular, and witty; they spoke seriously of trifles, and triflingly of serious matters, and I observed they unconcernedly directed their satires against the persons and the situations of absent friends. I was too great a stranger to understand much of these discussions, too much distressed and self-retired to enter into the full merit of these enigmas.

We reached the rose-grove. The lovely Fanny, the queen, as it seemed, of the day, was capricious enough to wish to gather for herself a blooming branch; a thorn pricked her, and a stream, as bright as if from damask-rose, flowed over her delicate hand. This accident put the whole company in motion. English court-plaster was instantly inquired

after. A silent, meagre, pale, tall, elderly man, who stood next to me instantly put his hand into the close-fitting breast-pocket of his old-fashioned, grey taffeta coat, took out a small pocket-book, opened it, and with a lowly bow gave the lady what she had wished for. She took it without any attention to the giver, and without a word of thanks. The wound was bound up, and they ascended the hill, from whose brow they admired the wide prospect over the park's green labyrinth, extending even to the immeasurable ocean.

It was indeed a grand and noble sight. A light speck appeared on the horizon between the dark waters and the azure heaven. "A telescope, here!" cried the merchant; and before any one from the crowds of servants appeared to answer his call, the grey man, as if he had been applied to, had already put his hand into his coat-pocket: he had taken from it a beautiful Dollond, and handed it over to Mr. Jones, who, as soon as he raised it to his eye, informed the company that it was the ship which had sailed yesterday, driven back by contrary winds. The telescope passed from hand to hand, but never again reached that of its owner. I, however, looked on the old man with astonishment, not conceiving how the large machine had come out of the tiny pocket. Nobody else seemed surprised, and they appeared to care no more about the grey man than about me.

Refreshments were produced; the rarest fruits of every climate, served in the richest dishes. Mr. Jones did the honours with easy, dignified politeness, and for the second time directed his discourse to me. "Eat then; you did not get this in your voyage." I bowed, but he did not observe me: he was talking to somebody else.

They would willingly have remained longer on the sod of the sloping hill, stretched themselves over its dampness. "Now it would be enchanting," said somebody of the company, "if we had Turkey carpets to spread here." The wish was hardly expressed ere the man in the grey

coat had put his hand into his pocket, and with modest, even humble demeanour, began to draw out a rich-embroidered Turkey carpet. It was received by the attendants as a matter of course, and laid down on the appointed spot. I looked with new surprise on the man, the pocket, and the carpet, which was above twenty paces long, and ten broad. I rubbed my eyes, not knowing what to think, and especially seemed moved by what had passed.

I longed to learn something about the man, and to inquire who he was; but I knew not to whom to apply, for I really was more afraid of the gentlemen-servants than of the gentlemen they served. I mustered up my spirits at last, and addressed myself to a young man who seemed less pretending than the rest, and who had oftener been left to himself. I gently asked him who that courteous gentleman was in grey clothes—"Who? He that looks like an end of thread blown away from a tailor's needle?"—"Yes, he that stands alone."—"I do not know him," he answered; and, determined as it seemed to break off the discussion with me, turned away, and entered on a trifling conversation with somebody else.

The sun now began to shine more intensely, and to annoy the ladies. The lovely Fanny carelessly addressed the grey man, whom, as far as I know, nobody had addressed before, with the frivolous question: had he a marquee? He answered with so low a reverence as if feeling an undeserved honour had been done him; his hand was already in his pocket, from whence I perceived canvas, bars, ropes, iron-work—everything, in a word, belonging to the most sumptuous tent—issuing forth. The young men helped to erect it; it covered the whole extent of the carpet, and no one appeared to consider all this as at all extraordinary.

If my mind was confused—nay, terrified—with these proceedings, how was I overpowered when the next-breathed wish brought from his pocket three noble, valiant steeds, with saddles and appurtenances! Imagine for a

moment, I pray you, three saddled horses from the same pocket, which had before produced a pocket-book, a telescope, an ornamented carpet twenty paces long and ten broad, a pleasure-tent of the same size, with bars and iron-work! If I did not solemnly assure you that I had seen it with my own eyes, you would certainly doubt the narrative.

Though there was much of embarrassment and humility in the man, and he excited so little attention, yet his appearance to me had in it something so appalling that I was not able to turn away my eyes from him. At last I could bear it no longer.

I determined to steal away from the company; and this was easy for one who had acted a part so little conspicuous. I wished to hasten back to the city, and to return in pursuit of my fortune the following morning to Mr. J., and if I could muster enough courage, to inquire something about the extraordinary grey man. Oh! Had I been thus privileged to escape!

I had hastily glided through the rose-grove, descended the hill, and found myself on a wide grass plot, when, alarmed with the apprehension of being discovered wandering from the beaten path, I looked around me with inquiring apprehension. How I was startled when I saw the old man in the grey coat behind, and advancing towards me! He immediately took off his hat, and bowed to me more profoundly than any one had ever done before. It was clear he wished to address me, and without extreme rudeness I could not avoid him. I in my turn uncovered myself, made my obeisance, and stood still with a bare head, in the sunshine, as if rooted there. I shook with terror while I saw him approach; I felt like a bird fascinated by a rattlesnake. He appeared sadly perplexed, kept his eyes on the ground, made several bows, approached nearer, and with a low and trembling voice, as if he were asking alms, thus accosted me:

"Will the gentleman forgive the intrusion of one who has

stopped him in this unusual way? I have a request to make, but pray pardon——"—"In the name of Heaven, sir!" I cried out in my anguish, "what can I offer one who——" We both started back, and methought both blushed deeply.

After a momentary silence he again began: "During the short time when I enjoyed the happiness of being near you, I observed, sir—will you allow me to say so—I observed, with unutterable astonishment, the beautiful, beautiful shadow in the sun which, with a certain noble contempt, and perhaps without being aware of it, you threw off from your feet. Forgive me this, I confess, too daring intrusion; should you be inclined to transfer it to me?"

He was silent, and my head turned round like a water-wheel. What could I make of this singular proposal for disposing of my shadow? He is crazy! thought I; and with an altered tone, yet more forcible, as contrasted with the humility of his own, I replied:

"How is this, good friend? Is not your own shadow enough for you? This seems to me a whimsical sort of bargain indeed!" He began again, "I have in my pocket many matters which might not be quite unacceptable to the gentleman. For this invaluable shadow I deem any price too little."

A chill came over me: I remembered what I had seen, and knew not how to address him whom I had just ventured to call my good friend. I spoke again, and assumed an extraordinary courtesy to set matters in order.

"Pardon, sir, pardon your most humble servant. I do not quite understand your meaning. How can my shadow—?" He interrupted me: "I only beg your permission to be allowed to lift up your noble shadow and put it in my pocket: how to do it is my own affair. As a proof of my gratitude for the gentleman, I leave him the choice of all the jewels which my pocket affords: the genuine divining rods, mandrake roots, change pennies, money-extractors, the napkins of Rolando's Squire, and divers other miracle-

workers—a choice assortment; but all this is not fit for you —better that you should have Fortunatus's wishing-cap, restored spick and span new; and also a fortune-bag which belonged to him."

"Fortunatus's fortune-bag!" exclaimed I, and, great as had been my terror, all my senses were now enraptured by the sound. I became dizzy—and nothing but double ducats seemed sparkling before my eyes.

"Condescend, sir, to inspect and make a trial of this bag." He put his hand into his pocket, and drew from it a moderately-sized, firmly-stitched purse of thick corcovan, with two convenient leather cords hanging to it, which he presented to me. I instantly dipped into it, drew from it ten pieces of gold, and ten more, and ten more, and yet ten more. I stretched out my hand. "Done! the bargain is made; I give you my shadow for your purse." He grasped my hand, kneeled down behind me, and with wonderful dexterity I perceived him loosening my shadow from the ground from head to foot; he lifted it up, he rolled it together and folded it, and at last put it into his pocket. He stood erect, bowed to me again, and returned back to the rose-grove. I thought I heard him laughing softly to himself. I held, however, the purse tight by its strings: the earth was sun-bright all around me—and my senses were still confused.

II

At last I came to myself, and hastened from a place where apparently I had nothing more to do. I first filled my pockets with the gold, then firmly secured the strings of the purse round my neck, taking care to conceal the purse itself in my bosom. I left the park unnoticed, reached the high road, and bent my way to the town. I was walking thoughtfully towards the gate when I heard a voice behind me: "Holla! young Squire! holla! Don't you hear?" I looked round—an old woman was calling after me. "Take care, sir, take

care—you have lost your shadow!"—"Thanks, good woman."—I threw her a piece of gold for her well-meant counsel and walked away under the trees.

At the gate I was again condemned to hear from the sentinel, "Where has the gentleman left his shadow?" and immediately afterwards a couple of women exclaimed, "Good heavens, the poor fellow has no shadow!" I began to be vexed, and carefully avoided walking in the sun. A confounded hunch-backed vagabond—I see him at this moment—had observed that I wanted a shadow. He instantly bawled out to the young tyros of the suburbs, who first criticised me and then bespattered me with mud: "Respectable people are accustomed to carry their shadows with them when they go into the sun." I scattered handfuls of gold among them to divert their attention; and with the assistance of some compassionate souls sprang into a hackney coach.

As soon as I found myself alone in the rolling vehicle I began to weep bitterly. My inward emotion suggested to me that even as in this world gold weighs down both merit and virtue, so a shadow might possibly be more valuable than gold itself, and that, as I had sacrificed my riches to my integrity on other occasions, so now I had given up my shadow for mere wealth; and what ought, what could become of me?

I continued still sadly discomposed when the coach stopped before the old tavern. I was shocked at the thought of again entering that vile garret. I sent for my baggage, took up the miserable bundle with contempt, threw some pieces of gold, and ordered to be driven to the principal hotel. The house faced north, so I had nothing to fear from the sun. I dismissed the driver with gold, selected the best front room, and locked myself in as soon as possible.

And how do you imagine I employed myself? Oh! my beloved Chamisso, I blush to confess it even to you. I drew forth the luckless purse from my bosom, and, impelled

by a sort of madness, which burned and spread within me like a furious conflagration, I shook out gold, and gold, and gold, and still more gold—strewed it over the floor, trampled on it, made it tinkle, and feasting my weak senses in the glitter and the sound, I added pile to pile, till I sunk exhausted on the golden bed. I rolled about and wallowed in delicious delirium. And so the day passed by, and so the evening. My door remained unopened, and night found me reposing on the gold, when sleep at length overcame me.

Then I dreamed of you. I fancied I was standing close to the glass door of your little apartment, and saw you sitting at your work-table, between a skeleton and a parcel of dried plants. Haller, Humboldt, and Linne lay open before you —on your sofa were a volume of Goethe, and *The Magic Ring*.[1] I looked at you for a long time, then at everything around you, and then at you again; but you moved not, you breathed not—you were dead.

I awoke: it seemed to be yet early—my watch had stopped. I felt as if I had been bastinadoed, yet both hungry and thirsty, for since the previous morning I had eaten nothing. With weariness and disgust I pushed away from me the gold, which but a little time before had satiated my foolish heart: I now in my perplexity knew not how to dispose of it. But it could not remain there. I tried to put it again into the purse—no, none of my windows opened upon the sea. I was obliged to content myself by dragging it, with immense labour and difficulty, to a large cupboard, which stood in a recess, where I packed it up. I left only a few handfuls lying about. When I had finished my labour, I sat down exhausted in an arm-chair, and waited till the people of the house began to stir. I ordered breakfast, and the presence of the landlord, as soon as practicable.

With this man I arranged the future management of my household. He recommended to me for my personal servant a certain Bendel, whose honest and intelligent

[1] Another novel of Fouqué.

countenance instantly interested me. It was he who from that moment accompanied me through life with sympathising attachment, and shared with me my gloomy destiny. I passed the whole day in my apartments with servants out of place, shoemakers, tailors, and shop-keepers. I provided myself with all necessaries and bought large quantities of jewels and precious stones, merely to get rid of some of my piles of gold; but it seemed scarcely possible to diminish the heap.

Meanwhile I contemplated my situation with most anxious doubts. I dared not venture one step from my door, and at evening ordered forty wax-lights to be kindled in my saloon, before I left the dark chamber. I thought with horror of the dreadful scene with the school-boys, and determined, whatever it might cost, once more to sound public opinion. The moon, at this season, illumined the night. Late at evening I threw a wide cloak around me, pulled down my hat over my eyes, and glided out of the house, trembling like a criminal. I walked first along the shadows of the houses to a remote open place. I then abandoned their protection, stepped out into the moonshine, resolved to learn my destiny from the lips of the passers-by.

But spare me, my friend, the painful repetition of what I was condemned to undergo! The deepest pity seemed to inspire the fairer sex; but my soul was not less wounded by this than by the contumely of the young, the proud disdain of the old, especially of those stout and well-fed men whose dignified shadows seemed to do them honour. A lovely graceful maiden, apparently accompanying her parents, who seemed not to look beyond their own footsteps, accidentally fixed her sparkling eyes upon me. She obviously started as she remarked my shadowless figure; she hid her beautiful face beneath her veil, hung down her head, and passed silently on.

I could bear it no longer. Salt streams burst forth from my eyes, and with a broken heart I hurried tremblingly back

into darkness. I was obliged to grope along by the houses, in order to feel my steps secured, and slowly and late I reached my dwelling.

The night was a sleepless one. My first care at daybreak was to order the man in the grey coat to be everywhere sought for. Perchance I might be lucky enough to discover him—and what a bliss! if he as well as I repented of our foolish bargain. I sent for Bendel; he seemed both apt and active. I described to him minutely the man who held in his possession that treasure without which life was but a torment to me. I told him the time, the place where I had seen him; particularised to him all the persons who could assist his inquiries, and added that he could especially ask after a Dollond's telescope, a gold-embroidered Turkish carpet, a superb tent, and also the black riding horses; whose history, without stating how, was closely connected with that of the unintelligible man, whom nobody seemed to notice, and whose appearance had destroyed the peace and happiness of my life.

When I had done, I brought out as much gold as I was able to carry. I laid jewels and precious stones to a still greater amount upon the pile. "Bendel," I said, "this levels many a path, and makes many a difficult thing easy. Be not sparing, you know I am not; but go and rejoice your master with the information on which his only hopes are built."

He went—he returned—and returned late and sorrowful. None of the merchant's servants, none of his guests—he had spoken to all—knew anything about the man in the grey coat. The new telescope was there, but they were all ignorant from whence it came. The tent and the carpet were extended on the same hill; the lackeys boasted of their master's magnificence; but none knew from whence these new valuables had come. They had administered to his pleasures, and he did not disturb his rest to inquire into their origin. The horses were in the stalls of the young men who had

rode them, and they lauded the generosity of the merchant, who had that day requested they would keep them as presents. Such was the light that Bendel threw upon this extraordinary history, and for this fruitless result received my grateful thanks. I beckoned gloomily to him that he should leave me alone.

But he resumed: "I have informed you, sir, of everything connected with the affair which most interests you. I have also a message to deliver, which a person gave to me this morning early, whom I met at the door, while I was going out on the business in which I have been so unfortunate. His own words were, 'Say to Mr. Peter Schlemihl, he will see me here no more, as I am going to cross the sea, and a favourable wind beckons me to the haven. But after a year and a day I shall have the honour to seek him out, and perhaps to propose to him another arrangement which may then be to his liking. Remember me most obediently to him, and assure him of my thanks.' I asked him who he was, and he replied that you knew."

"What was the man's appearance?" I cried, full of forebodings. And Bendel described the man in the grey coat, feature by feature, word for word, precisely as he had depicted him, when inquiring about him.

"Miserable mortal!" exclaimed I, wringing my hands, "it was he! it was he himself!" He looked as if scales had fallen from his eyes. "Yes, it was he, it was indeed he!" he cried out in agony; "and I, silly, deluded one, I did not know him—I did not know him; I have betrayed my master."

He broke out into the loudest reproaches against himself. He wept bitterly. His despair could not but excite my pity. I ministered consolation to him, assured him again and again that I did not doubt his fidelity, and sent him instantly to the haven, to follow the strange man's steps if possible. But on that very morning many vessels which had been kept by contrary winds back in port had put to

sea, all destined to distant lands and other climes; the grey man had disappeared, trackless as a shade.

III

Of what use would wings be to him who is fast bound in iron fetters? He must still despair, and despair with deeper melancholy. I lay like Taffner by his stronghold, far removed from any earthly consolation, starving in the midst of riches. They gave me no enjoyment; I cursed them; they had cut me off from mankind. Concealing my gloomy secret within me, I trembled before the meanest of my servants, whom I could not but envy; for he had his shadow, and could show himself in the sun. Alone in my apartments, I mourned through harassing days and nights, and anguish fed upon my heart.

One individual was constantly sorrowing under my eyes. My faithful Bendel ceased not to torment himself with silent reproach that he had deceived the confidence of his generous master, and had not recognised him whom he was sent to seek, and with whom my mournful fate seemed strongly intertwined. I could not blame him: I recognised too well in that event the mysterious nature of the unknown being.

But, to leave nothing untried, I sent Bendel with a costly brilliant ring to the most celebrated painter in the city, requesting he would pay me a visit. He came. I ordered away my servants, locked the door, sat myself by him; and after praising his art, I came with a troubled spirit to the great disclosure, having first enjoined on him the strictest secrecy.

"Mr. Professor," I began, "can you paint a false shadow for one who, in the most luckless way in the world, has lost his own?"—"You mean a reflected shadow?"—"To be sure."—"But," he rejoined, "through what awkwardness could he lose his own shadow?"—"How it happened," replied I, "that does not matter, but——" I impudently

began with a lie, "last winter, when he was travelling in Russia, it froze so severely, during the extraordinary cold, that his shadow was frozen to the ground, and it was impossible for him to get it free."

"And I," said the professor, "could only make him a sheet shadow, which he would be apt to lose again on the slightest motion; especially for one whose genuine shadow was so badly fixed as must be inferred from your account. The simplest and wisest determination for him who has no shadow is not to go in the sun." He stood up and walked away, after having sent me a piercing glance which mine could not endure. I sunk back on my chair, and veiled my face with my hands.

Thus Bendel found me when he entered. He saw his master's sorrow, and wanted silently and respectfully to turn back. I raised my eyes: the weight of my grief was upon me—I determined to divide it. "Bendel!" I called to him, "Bendel, you, who alone see and respect my sufferings, not curiously prying into them, but secretly and devotedly sharing them with me—come to me, Bendel, be the nearest to my heart. The stores of my gold I have not concealed from you; from you I will not hide the store of my anguish. Bendel, forsake me not. You know I am wealthy, kind, and generous, and perhaps you think for that the world should honour me; but you see I shun the world, I hide myself from its observation. Bendel, the world has judged me and condemned me—and Bendel too, perhaps, will turn from me when he possesses my dreadful secret. Bendel! I am indeed rich, liberal, and independent, but—heavens! I have no shadow!"

"No shadow!" echoed the good young man in an agony, while bright tears broke from his eyelids. "Alas! alas! that I should have been born to serve a shadowless master!" He was silent, and I hid my face in my hands.

At last I tremblingly said, "Bendel, you have now my confidence, betray it if you will. Away! and bear witness

against me." He seemed struggling with internal emotion; he threw himself at my feet, seized my hand, and bathed it with his tears. "No," he cried, "let the world say what it may, I will not leave my good master for the sake of a shadow; I will do what is right,-and not what is prudent: I will remain with you, I will lend you my shadow, I will help you where I can; I will weep with you." I fell on his neck, overcome with such an unexpected self-devotion. I felt assured he did nothing for the sake of gold.

From that moment my fate and my mode of life were somewhat changed. It is indescribable how carefully Bendel sought to cover my defects. He was ever before me and with me, foreseeing everything, arranging everything, and where unexpected danger threatened, covering me with his shadow, for he was fortunately taller and stouter than I. Again I mingled with mankind and acted my part in the scenes of the world. It was necessary to assume much singularity and queerness, but these sit well upon a rich man, and while the truth lay concealed, I enjoyed all the honour and esteem to which wealth has a claim. I looked with more calmness on the advancing year and day, whose close was to bring with them the visit of the mysterious unknown.

I was well aware that I should not remain long in the place where I had been seen without a shadow, and where I might so easily be betrayed; and I thought perhaps more on this, remembering how I had first shown myself to the merchant, which was now a sad recollection to me. Consequently I would only make an experiment here, that I might learn how to introduce myself hereafter with more ease and confidence. Nevertheless it happened that I was momentarily bound down by my vanity, which is the firm ground in man where the anchor fixes itself.

The beautiful Fanny, whom I again met in another situation, bestowed on me some attention, without recollecting that she had seen me before; for now I had both wit and understanding. When I talked, all listened, and I

could not imagine when or how I had acquired the talent of leading or directing the conversation. The impression which I perceived I had produced on the fair one made me, as she would have me, a very fool, and from this time I pursued her, where only I could pursue her, through shades and twilight. I was vain enough to make her vain of me; yet I could not succeed, notwithstanding all my efforts, to drive the intoxication from my head to my heart.

But why enter upon the details of an everyday story? You know, and have often told me, how other wealthy people spend their days. From an old well-known drama, in which I, out of mere good-humour, was playing a hackneyed part, arose a singular and incredible catastrophe, unexpected by me, or Fanny, or anybody.

According to my custom, one lovely evening I had assembled a large company in an illuminated garden. I was wandering about with my divinity arm in arm, separated from the rest of the guests, and endeavouring to amuse her with well-timed conversation. She looked modestly towards the ground, and gently returned the pressure of my hand. At this moment the moon unexpectedly burst through the clouds; her shadow alone was there. She started, looked alarmed at me, then at the earth, as if her eyes were asking for my shadow. All her emotions were painted so faithfully on her countenance that I should have burst into a loud laugh, had I not felt an icy chillness creeping over me.

She sunk down from my arms in a swoon. I flew like an arrow through the alarmed company, reached the door, threw myself into the first coach I found waiting there, and hurried back to the city, where, to my misfortune, I had left the foresighted Bendel. He was startled at seeing me—a word told all. Post-horses were instantly ordered. I took only one of my servants with me, an interested villain called Rascal, who had learnt to make himself useful by his dexterity, and who could suspect nothing of what had occurred. We travelled a hundred miles before night. Bendel was

left behind to dismiss my household, to distribute my money by paying my debts, and to bring away what was most necessary. When he overtook me the next day I threw myself into his arms, solemnly promising to commit no farther folly, but to be more discreet in future. We continued our journey without interruption, passing over the chain of mountains which formed the frontier, and only when on the descent, and separated by the high bastions from the land so fatal to my peace, did I allow myself to be comforted, and hastened away to a watering-place in the vicinity, where I sought repose from my disappointments and sorrows.

IV

I must rapidly hurry over a part of my history on which I should rejoice to linger if I could invoke the living spirit of departed time. But the beautiful associations which animated it once, and which alone could animate its memory, are extinguished within me. When I seek them—that influence which ruled so mightily over my joys and sorrows, my mingled destiny—I strike in vain against a rock, that gives out a living stream no longer; the divinity is fled. Oh, how changed is the aspect of those days of old! My intention was now to act an heroic character, but it was badly studied, and I a novice on the stage, forgetting my part while fascinated by a pair of blue eyes. In the intoxication of the scene, the parents seemed eager to close the bargain, and the farce closes in a common mockery. And this is all! So stale and unprofitable, so melancholy are the revisitings of what beat once so nobly, proudly in my bosom. Mina! as I wept when I lost thee, even now I weep to have lost thee within me. Am I become so old? Pitiful intellect of man! O for a pulse-beat of those days, a moment of that consciousness; but no! I am a solitary wave in the dark and desolate sea, and the sparkling glass I drank was drugged with misery.

I had previously sent Bendel with bags of gold to fit out a dwelling suitable for me in the town. He had scattered about a great deal of money, talked mysteriously of the illustrious stranger whom he had the honour to serve (for I did not choose to be named), and this filled the good people with strange notions. As soon as the house was ready for me, Bendel returned to convey me thither. We started immediately.

About an hour's distance from the place, on a sunny plain, a great number of persons in gala dresses arrested our progress. The coach stopped: music, bell-ringing, and cannonading were heard; a loud acclamation rent the air; and a chorus of singularly beautiful virgins in white robes appeared at the door of the carriage, one of whom, surpassing the rest as the sun surpasses in brightness the stars of evening, stepped forward, and with graceful and modest blushes knelt before me, and presented to me on a silken cushion a wreath of laurel, olive and rose branches, garlanded together, while she uttered some words, which I understood not, of majesty, awe, and love, whose soft and silver tones enchanted my ear and my bosom: it seemed to me as if the heavenly apparition had once glided before me in other days. The chorus began, and sang the praise of a good monarch, and the happiness of his people.

And this happened, my friend, in the bright sunshine. She continued to kneel two steps before me, and I, shadowless, dared not spring over the gulf that I might fall on my knees in her angelic presence. What would I not have given in that moment for a shadow! I was obliged to conceal my shame, my anguish, my despair, by sinking back into the carriage. Bendel relieved me from my embarrassment: he leaped out from the other side. I called him back, and gave him out of my little casket, which lay close at hand, a rich diamond crown, which was intended to adorn the lovely Fanny. He moved forward, and spoke in his master's name, "who neither could," he said, "nor would accept

such flattering marks of honour: there must have been some error, though he could not but thank the worthy townspeople for their expressions of kindness." He then took the garland of flowers from its place, and put there instead of it the crown of diamonds. His hand assisted the beautiful virgin to rise, and with a look of dignity he sent away the clergy, magistrates, and deputies. Nobody was allowed a farther audience. He bid the crowd retire and make room for the horses, flung himself into the carriage, and off we went in a rapid gallop to the town, through the arches of flowers and laurels which had been erected. The cannon continued to thunder; the coach at last reached my abode. I turned hastily through the door dividing the assembly who had gathered together to see me. The mob cried, "God bless him!" under my window, and I ordered double ducats to be scattered among them. At night the town was spontaneously illuminated.

And I knew not yet what all this meant, nor who I was imagined to be. I sent out Rascal to get information. He discovered that the people believed they had certain information that the good king of Prussia was travelling through the country, under the title of Count; that my adjutant had been recognised, and had discovered both himself and me—in a word, that infinite joy had been felt at the certainty of having me among them. They had ascertained that as I wished to preserve the strictest *incognito*, how wrong it had been to draw up the veil so intrudingly; but as I had expressed my displeasure with so much graciousness and kindness, surely my generous heart could forgive them.

It was so excellent a joke for my scoundrel servant, that he did as much as possible, by his sharp remonstrances, to confirm the good people in their opinions. He gave me a most amusing account of his proceedings, and as he saw it animated me, he thought to add to my enjoyment by a display of his own knavish tricks. Shall I confess it? I

was not a little flattered by even the illusion of being mistaken for the head of the kingdom.

I ordered a feast to be provided on the following evening, under the trees which overshadowed the expanse in front of my house, and the whole town to be invited. The mysterious virtue of my purse, the exertions of Bendel, the dexterous contrivances of Rascal, succeeded in doing wonders in the trifling space of time. It is really astonishing how richly and beautifully everything was arranged in so short a period. Such pomp and superfluity were exhibited there, and the richly fanciful illuminations were so admirably managed, that I felt quite at ease; I had nothing to find fault with, and I could not but praise the diligence of my servants.

Evening darkness came on; the guests appeared and were introduced to me. The word "majesty" was no more whispered; but I often heard, uttered in deep awe and humility, "the Count." What could I do? The word Count satisfied me, and from that moment I was Count Peter. But in the midst of the festive crowd I sought but one. At last she appeared: she *was* the crown and she wore it. She followed her parents modestly, and seemed not to know that she was the loveliest of the assemblage. The forest-master, his wife, and daughter were introduced. I said much that was agreeable and obliging to the old people; but I stood before their daughter like a checked boy, and could not utter a single word. At last I stammered forth a request that she would honour the festival by undertaking that office whose badge she bore. With a touching look she begged blushingly that I would excuse her; but more abashed before her than she herself, I, as her first subject, offered her my humble tribute; and my glance served as a command to all the guests, each of whom seemed anxious to meet it. Over this joyful festivity presided majesty, innocence, and grace allied with beauty. Mina's happy parents believed that out of respect for them their

child had been elevated to those unexpected honours, and I was in an unspeakable transport of joy. I ordered everything that was left of the jewels, pearls, and precious stones which I had purchased with my perplexing piles of wealth to be placed in two covered dishes and distributed in the name of the Queen among her playfellows and the ladies present, and I ordered gold to be thrown over the border fence among the joyous crowds.

On the following morning Bendel communicated to me, in confidence, that the suspicions he had formed against Rascal's integrity were fully confirmed; he had yesterday purloined several bags of gold. "Let us not envy," I replied, "the poor devil this trifling booty. I scatter my money about profusely, why not to him? Yesterday he and everybody else served me nobly and arranged a delightful festivity."

Nothing farther was said about it, Rascal continued to be my head-servant, and Bendel my friend and confidant. He had imagined my wealth to be inexhaustible, and he cared not to inquire into its source. Entering into my feelings, he assisted me to find out constant occasions to display my wealth, and to spend it. Of the unknown, pale, sneaking fellow, he only knew that without him I could not get released from the curse which bound me, and that I dreaded the man on whom my only hope reposed. Besides, I was now convinced he could discover me anywhere, I him nowhere, so that I determined to abandon a fruitless inquiry and to await the promised day.

The magnificence of the festival, and my condescension there, confirmed the obstinately credulous inhabitants in their first opinion of my dignity. It appeared very soon, not withstanding, in the newspapers, that the reported journey of the King was wholly without foundation. But I had been a king, and a king I was unfortunately compelled to remain, and certainly I was one of the richest and kingliest who had ever appeared. But what king could I be? The world has

never had cause to complain of any scarcity of monarchs, at least in our days; and the good people, who had never seen one with their own eyes, first fixed on one, and then, equally happy, on another; but Count Peter continued to be my name.

There once appeared among the visitors to the baths a merchant who had made himself a bankrupt in order to get rich, and he enjoyed great esteem. He was accompanied by a broad palish shadow. He wished ostentatiously to display the wealth he had acquired, and he determined to be my rival. I applied to my bag. I drove on the poor devil at such a rate that in order to save himself he was obliged to become a bankrupt a second time. Thus I got rid of him, and by similar means I created in this neighbourhood many an idler and a vagabond.

Though I thus lived in apparently kingly pomp and prodigality, my habits at home were simple and unpretending. With thoughtful foresight, I had made it a rule that no one except Bendel should, on any pretence, enter the chamber which I occupied. As long as the sun shone I remained there locked in. People said, "The Count is engaged in his cabinet." The crowds of couriers were kept in communication by these occupations, for I dispatched and received them on the most trifling business. At evening alone I received company under the trees, or in my saloon, which was skilfully and magnificently lighted, according to Bendel's arrangement. Whenever I went out Bendel watched round me with Argus' eyes. My steps were always tending to the forester's garden, and that only for the sake of *her:* the inmost spirit of my existence was my love.

My good Chamisso, I will hope you have not forgotten what love is! I leave much to your filling up. Mina was, indeed, a love-worthy, good, and gentle girl. I had obtained full possession of her thoughts; and in her modesty she could not imagine how she had become worthy of my regard,

and that I dwelt only upon her; but she returned love for love in the full youthful energy of an innocent heart. She loved like a woman, all self-sacrificing, self-forgetting, and living only in him who was her life, careless even though she should perish—in a word, she truly loved.

But I—— Oh, what frightful moments!—frightful, yet worthy to be recalled. How often did I weep in Bendel's bosom after I recovered from the first inebriety of rapture! How severely did I condemn myself, that I, a shadowless being, should seal, with wily selfishness, the perdition of an angel, whose pure soul I had attached to me by lies and theft! Now I determined to unveil myself to her; now, with solemn oaths, I resolved to tear myself from her, and to fly; then again I broke out into tears, and arranged with Bendel for visiting her in the forest-garden again in the evening.

Sometimes I allowed myself to be flattered with the hopes of the now near approaching visit of the unknown, mysterious old man, and wept anew when I recollected that I had sought him in vain. I had reckoned the day when I was again to expect to see that awful being. He had said a year and a day! and I relied on his word.

The parents were good, worthy old people, loving their only child most tenderly; the whole affair had taken them by surprise, and, as matters stood, they knew not how to act. They could never have dreamed that Count Peter should think of their child; but it was clear he loved her passionately, and was loved in return. The mother, indeed, was vain enough to think of the possibility of such an alliance, and to prepare for its accomplishment; but the calm, good sense of the old man never gave such an ambitious hope a moment's consideration. But they were both convinced of the purity of my love, and could do nothing but pray for their child.

A letter is now in my hand which I received about this time from Mina. This is her very character. I will copy it for you:

"I know I am a weak, silly girl; for I have taught myself to believe my beloved would not give me pain, and this because I deeply, dearly love him. Alas! thou art so kind, so unutterably kind! But do not delude me. For me make no sacrifice.—Heaven! I could hate myself if I caused thee to do so. No, thou hast made me infinitely happy; thou hast taught me to love thee. But go in peace! my destiny tells me Count Peter's is not mine, but the whole world's; and then I shall feel proudly as I hear: 'That it was he, and he again; that he has done this—that he has been adored here, and deified there.' When I think of this, I could reproach thee for forgetting thy high destinies in a simple maiden. Go in peace, or the thought will make me miserable—me, alas! who am so happy, so blessed through thee. And have not I entwined in thy existence an olive-branch and a rose-bud, as in the garland, which I dared to present thee? Think of thyself, my beloved one; fear not to leave me. I should die so blessed, so unutterably blessed through thee."

You may well imagine how these words thrilled through my bosom. I told her I was not that which I was supposed to be—I was only a wealthy, but an infinitely wretched man. There was, I said, a curse upon me, which should be the only secret between her and me; for I had not yet lost the hope of being delivered from it. This was the poison of my existence: that I could have swept her away with me into the abyss, the sole light, the sole bliss, the sole spirit of my life. Then wept she again that I was so unhappy. She was so amiable, so full of love. How blessed had she felt to have offered herself up in order to spare me a single tear!

But she was far from rightly understanding my words: she sometimes fancied I was a prince pursued by a cruel proscription, a high and devoted chief whom her imagination loved to depicture, and to give to her beloved one all the bright hues of heroism.

Once I said to her, "Mina, on the last day of the coming month my doom may change and be decided. If that should not happen I must die, for I cannot make thee miserable." She wept, and her head sunk into my bosom. "If thy doom should change, let me know thou art happy; I have no claim upon thee—but shouldst thou become miserable, bind me to thy misery, I will help thee to bear it."

"Beloved maiden, withdraw—withdraw the rash, the foolish word which has escaped thy lips. Dost thou know what is misery? Dost thou know what is my curse? That thy beloved—what he is? Dost thou see me shuddering convulsively before thee, and concealing from thee——" She sunk sobbing at my feet, and renewed her declaration with a solemn vow.

I declared to the now approaching forest-master my determination to ask the hand of his daughter for the first day of the coming month. I fixed that period because in the meanwhile many an event might occur which would have great influence on my fortunes. My love for his daughter could not but be unchangeable.

The good old man started back, as it were, while the words escaped from Count Peter's lips. He fell upon my neck, and then blushed that he had so far forgotten himself. Then he began to doubt, to ponder, to inquire; he spoke of dowry, of security for the future for his beloved child. I thanked him for reminding me of it. I told him I wished to settle and live a life free from anxiety, in a neighbourhood where I appeared to be beloved. I ordered him to buy in the name of his daughter the finest estates that were offered, and refer to me for the payment. A father would surely best serve the lover of his child. This gave him trouble enough, for some stranger or other always forestalled him, but he bought for only the amount of about a million florins.

The truth is, this was a sort of innocent trick to get rid of him, which I had already once done before, for I must own he was rather tedious. The good mother, on the contrary,

was somewhat deaf, and not like him, always jealous of the honour of entertaining the noble Count.

The mother pressed forward. The happy people crowded around me, entreating me to lengthen the evening among them. I dared not linger a moment: the moon was rising above the twilight or evening; my time was come.

Next evening I returned again to the forest-garden. I had thrown my broad mantle over my shoulders, my hat was slouched over my eyes. I advanced towards Mina. As she lifted up her eyes and looked at me, an involuntary shudder came over her. The frightful night in which I had shown myself shadowless in the moonlight returned in all its brightness to my mind. It was indeed she! Had she too recognised me? She was silent and full of thought. I felt the oppression of a nightmare in my breast. I rose from my seat. She threw herself speechless on my bosom. I left her.

But now I often found her in tears. My soul grew darker and darker, while her parents seemed to revel in undisturbed joy. The day so big with fate rolled onwards, heavy and dark like a thunder-cloud. Its eve had arrived. I could scarcely breathe. I had been foresighted enough to fill some chests with gold. I waited for midnight: it tolled.

And there I sat, my eyes directed to the hand of the clock; the seconds, the minutes, as they tinkled, entered me like a dagger. I rose up at every sound I heard. The day began to dawn; the leaden hours crowded one on another; it was morning—evening—night. The hands of the timepiece moved slowly on, and hope was departing. It struck eleven, and nothing appeared. The last minutes of the last hour vanished—still nothing appeared. The first stroke—the last stroke of *twelve* sounded. I sank hopeless on my couch in ceaseless tears. To-morrow, shadowless for ever, to-morrow I should solicit the hand of my beloved. Towards morning a heavy sleep closed my eyes.

V

It was yet early when I was awakened by the sound of voices violently disputing in my ante-chamber. I listened: Bendel was forbidding access to my door. Rascal swore loudly and deeply that he would take no orders from his fellow-servant, and insisted on rushing into my apartment. The good Bendel warned him that if such language reached my ears he might perchance lose a profitable place, but Rascal threatened to lay violent hands upon him if he impeded his entrance any longer.

I had half dressed myself. I angrily flung the door open, and called out to Rascal, "What dost thou want, thou scoundrel?" He retreated two paces, and answered with perfect coldness, "Humbly to request, may it please your lordship, for once to show me your shadow; the sun is shining so beautifully in the court."

I felt as if scathed by a thunderbolt, and it was long before I could utter a word: "How can a servant presume against his master that—?" He interrupted me with provoking calmness: "A servant may be a very honest man, and yet refuse to serve a shadowless master—I must have my discharge." I tried another weapon.

"But, Rascal, my dear Rascal, who has put this wild notion into your head? How can you imagine—?" But he continued in the same tone, "There are people who assert you have no shadow; and, in a word, either show me your shadow or give me my discharge!"

Bendel, pale and trembling, but discreeter than I, made me a sign to seek a resource in the silence-imposing gold—but it had lost its power; Rascal flung it at my feet. "I will take nothing from a shadowless being." He turned his back upon me, put his hat on his head, and went slowly out of the apartment, whistling a tune. I stood there like a petrifaction—looking after him, vacant and motionless.

Heavy and melancholy, with a death-like feeling within

me, I prepared to redeem my promise, and like a criminal before his judges, to show myself in the forester's garden. I ascended to the dark arbour which had been called by my name, where an appointment had been made to meet me. Mina's mother came forwards toward me, gay and free from care. Mina was seated there, pale and lovely, as the earliest snow when it kisses the last autumnal flower and soon dissolves into bitter drops. The forest-master, with a written sheet in his hand, wandered in violent agitation from side to side, seemingly overcome with internal feelings, which painted his usually unvarying countenance with constantly changing paleness and scarlet. He came towards me as I entered, and with broken accents requested to speak to me alone. The path through which he invited me to follow him led to an open sunny part of the garden. I seated myself down without uttering a word. A long silence followed, which even our good mother dared not interrupt.

With irregular steps the forest-master paced the arbour backwards and forwards; he stood for a moment before me, looked into the paper which he held, and said, with a most penetrating glance, "Count, do you indeed know one Peter Schlemihl?"—I was silent—"a man of reputable and of great accomplishments." He waited for my answer.

"And what if I were he?"—"He!" added he, vehemently, "who has in some way got rid of his shadow!"—"Oh, my forebodings! my forebodings," exclaimed Mina. "Alas, I knew long ago that he had no shadow!" and she flung herself into her mother's arms, who, alarmed, pressed her convulsively to her bosom, reproaching me with having concealed such a fatal secret from her; but she, like Arethusa, was bathed in a fountain of tears, which flowed abundantly at the sound of my voice, and at my approach tempestuously burst forth.

"And so," cried the forest-master furiously, "your matchless impudence has sought to betray that poor girl and me. And you pretended to love her—her whom you

dragged to the abyss—her. See how she weeps, how she is agonised! O shame! O sin!"

I was so completely confused that I answered incoherently, "After all, 'twas but a shadow—nothing but a shadow—one can manage without it. And surely it is not worth making such a noise about." But I felt so deeply the deception of my language that I was silent before he deigned to give me an answer. I added, "What a man has lost to-day he may find to-morrow."

He spoke angrily: "Explain to me, sir—explain how you got rid of your shadow." I was compelled again to lie: "A vulgar fellow trod so clumsily upon my shadow that he tore a great hole in it; I sent it to be mended—gold can do everything; I ought to have received it back yesterday."

"Very well, sir, very well," he replied. "You sue for my daughter—others do the same; as her father I must take care of her. I give you three days' respite, which you may employ in procuring a shadow. Come to me after this, and if you have one that suits you, you will be welcome; but if not, on the fourth day I must tell you my daughter shall be the wife of another." I attempted to address a word to Mina; but she clung, violently agitated, closer to her mother, who silently beckoned to me that I should retire. I slunk away as if the world's gates had closed behind me.

Escaped to Bendel's affectionate guidance. I wandered with erring footsteps through fields and woods. Sweat-drops of anguish fell from my brow; deep groans broke from my bosom; within me raged a wild frenzy.

I know not how long it lasted, when on a sunny heath I found myself held by the sleeve. I stood still, and looked around me. It was the grey-coated stranger; he seemed to have followed me till he was out of breath. He instantly began:

"I had announced myself for to-day; you have hardly been able to wait so long, but all is well—you will take good counsel: exchange your shadow again; it only waits

your commands, and then turn back. You will be welcome in the forester's garden; it was but a jest. Rascal, who has betrayed you, and who is a suitor to your betrothed, I will dispose of—the fellow is ripe."

I stood still, as if I were asleep. "Announced for to-day?" I reckoned the time over again; it was so. I had erred in my calculations. I put my right hand on the bag in my bosom. He discovered my meaning, and drew back two paces.

"No, Sir Count, that is in good hands, that you may retain." I looked on him with staring and inquiring eyes. He spoke: "May I ask for a trifling memento? Be so good as to sign this note." The following words were on the parchment he held:

"I hereby promise to deliver over my soul to the bearer after its natural separation from my body."

I looked with dumb astonishment, now on the grey unknown, and now on the writing. In the meantime he had dipped a new pen in a drop of my blood, which was flowing from a scratch made by a thorn in my hand. He handed the pen to me.

"Who are you, then?" I at last inquired. "What does that matter?" he answered. "Don't you see what I am?—a poor devil, a sort of philosopher or alchemist, who receives spare thanks for great favours he confers on his friends; one who has no enjoyment in this world, except a little *experimentalising*. But sign, I pray—aye, just there on the right, *Peter Schlemihl*.

I shook my head. "Forgive me, sir, for I will not sign."—"Not!" replied he, with seeming surprise.

"'Tis an affair that requires some consideration—to add my soul to my shadow in the bargain."—"Oh, oh!" he exclaimed. "Consideration!" and burst into a loud laugh. "May I then be allowed to ask, what sort of a thing is your

soul? Have you ever seen it? Do you know what will become of it when you are once departed? Rejoice that you have found somebody to take notice of it, to buy, even during your lifetime, the reversion of this X, this galvanic power, this polarising influence, or whatever the silly trifle may turn out to be; to pay for it with your bodily shadow, with something really substantial; the hand of your mistress, the fulfilment of your prayers. Or will you rather deliver over the sweet maiden to that contemptible scoundrel, Mr. Rascal? No, no, look to that with your own eyes. Come hither, I will lend you the wishing-cap too (he drew something from his pocket), and we will have a ramble unseen through the forest garden.

I must confess I was sadly ashamed to be thus laughed at by this fellow. I hated him from the bottom of my soul; and I believe this personal antipathy prevented me, more than my principles, from giving the required signature for my shadow, necessary as it was to me. The thought was unbearable, that I should undertake a walk in his company. This sneaking, this scornful, irritating imp, placing himself betwixt me and my beloved, sporting with two bleeding hearts, roused my deepest feelings. I looked on what had passed as ordained, and considered my misery as irretrievable. I turned upon the man and said:

"Sir, I sold you my shadow for this most estimable bag of yours: I have repented it enough. If the bargain can be annulled, in the name of——" He shook his head, looked at me with a dark frown. I began again: "I will sell you nothing more of my possessions, though you may offer as high a price as for my shadow, and I will sign nothing. Hence you may conclude that the metamorphosis to which you invite me would perhaps be more agreeable to you than to me. Forgive me, but it cannot be otherwise; let us part."

"I am sorry, Mr. Schlemihl, that you so capriciously push away the favours which are procured to you; but I

may be more fortunate another time. Farewell, till our speedy meeting! By the way, you will allow me to mention that I do not by any means permit my purchases to get mouldy; I hold them in special regard, and take the best possible care of them."

With this he took my shadow out of his pocket, and with dexterous fling it was unrolled and spread out on the heath on the sunny side of his feet, so that he stood between the two attendant shadows, mine and his, and walked away. Mine seemed to belong to him as much as his own—it accommodated itself to all his movements and all his necessities.

When I saw my poor shadow again, after so long a separation, and found it applied to such base uses, at a moment when for its sake I was suffering nameless anguish, my heart broke within me, and I began to weep most bitterly. The hated one walked proudly on with his spoil, and unblushingly renewed his proposals.

"You may have it—'tis but a stroke of the pen. You will save, too, your poor unhappy Mina from the claws of the vagabond—save her for the arms of the most honourable Count. 'Tis but a stroke of the pen, I say." Tears broke forth with new violence, but I turned away, and beckoned to him to be gone.

Bendel, who had followed my steps to the present spot, approached me, full of sadness, at this instant. The kind-hearted fellow perceived my weeping, and observed my shadow, which he could not mistake, attached to the figure of the extraordinary, grey unknown one, and he endeavoured by force to put me in possession of my property; but not being able to lay firm hold on this subtle thing, he ordered the old man, in a peremptory tone, to abandon what did not belong to him. He, for a reply, turned his back upon my well-meaning servant and marched away. Bendel followed him closely, and lifting up the stout black-thorn cudgel which he carried, required the man to give up the shadow, enforcing

the command with the strength of his nervous arm; but the man, accustomed perhaps to such encounters, bowed his head, raised his shoulders, and walked silently and calmly over the heath, accompanied by my shadow and my faithful man. For a long time I heard the dull sound echoed over the waste. It was lost at last in the distance. I stood alone with my misery as before.

VI

Thus left behind on the dreary heath, I gave vent to countless tears, which seemed to lighten my bosom of its intolerable weight. But I saw no bounds, no outlet, no term to my terrible misery, and with wild impatience I sucked in the poison which the mysterious being had poured into my wounds. When I recalled the image of Mina, her soft and lovely form appeared pale and weeping before me, as I had seen her in my hour of ignominy. Then the shade of Rascal impudently and contumaciously seemed to step between us. I veiled my face, I fled across the waste; but the ghastly vision still pursued me. I ran—it was close to me. I sank breathless to the ground, and watered it with renewed springs of tears.

And all about a shadow—a shadow which a stroke of the pen would have restored to me! I mused again on the strange proposal, and my refusal. All was dark and desolate within me, I had neither argument nor reason left.

The day rolled by. I calmed my hunger with wild fruits, my thirst with the nearest mountain stream. Night approached; I stretched myself under a tree. The damp dawn awaked me from a heavy sleep, in which I heard myself groan, as if struggling with death. Bendel had surely lost my traces, and I rejoiced to think so. I determined to return among man no more, from whom I fled like the shy beasts of the mountain Thus I existed through three weary days.

On the morning of the fourth I found myself on a shady plain, where the sun was shining brightly. I sat down there on a fragment of rock in its beam, for I enjoyed to bask again in its long-forbidden glance. But I was alarmed by a gentle rustling. I looked eagerly round me, preparing to fly. I saw no one; but there passed by on the sunny sand a man's shadow not unlike my own, wandering about alone, and which appeared straying from its owner.

A mighty impulse was roused within me. Shadow, thought I, art thou seeking thy master? I will be he. And I sprang forward to possess myself of it. I imagined that if I were lucky enough to get into its track I could so arrange that its feet should just meet mine; it would even attach and accommodate itself to me.

The shadow, on my moving, fled before me, and I was compelled to begin an active chase after the unsubstantial wanderer. The eager desire to be released from the perplexities in which I stood armed me with unusual strength. It fled to a distant wood, in whose obscurity it would have been necessarily immediately lost. I saw it. A terror pierced my heart, kindled my burning desire, and gave wings to my feet. I gained on the shadow, approached it nearer and nearer; I was within reach of it. It stopped suddenly and turned towards me. Like the lion pouncing upon his prey I sprang forward upon it with a mighty effort to take possession. I felt most unexpectedly that I had dashed against something which made a bodily resistance—I received from an unseen power the most violent thrust which a human being ever felt. The working of terror was dreadfully acting within me; its effect was to close my arms as in a spasm, to seize on what stood unseen before me. I staggered onwards, and fell prostrate on the ground. Beneath on his back was a man whom I held fast, and who now was visible.

The whole affair was now naturally explained. The man must have possessed the viewless charm which makes the

possessor, but not his shadow, invisible. He first held it, and afterwards had thrown it away. I looked round, and immediately discovered the shadow of the invisible charm. I leaped up and sprang towards it, and did not miss at last the valuable spoil—unseen, and shadowless, I held the charm in my hand.

The man rose up speedily. He looked round after his fortunate subduer, not being able to discover in the broad sunny plain either him or his shadow, which he sought with the greatest anxiety; for he had no reason to suspect, and no time to observe, that I was a shadowless being. As soon as he discovered that every trace was vanished, he raised his hands against himself in the wildest despair, and tore his hair. But this newly acquired treasure gave me the means and the disposition to mingle again among my fellow-men. No pretext was wanting for palliating to my own mind this despicable robbery, or, rather, it wanted no such pretext. With a view of ridding myself of any internal reproaches, I hurried away, not even looking back on the unfortunate victim whose agonised tones I heard long repeated after me. So, at least, at that time I looked upon the circumstances of that event.

I longed to go to the forest-garden, in order to inform myself of the truth of what the hated one had announced to me; but I knew not where I was, and in order to inform myself as to the neighbourhood, I mounted the nearest hill, and saw from its brow the tower of the forest-garden lying at my feet. My heart beat with agitation, and tears, very different from those I had before shed, burst into my eyes. I was to see her again. An anxious, longing desire hurried my steps down the straightest path. A crowd of peasants passed unseen, going from town; they were talking of me, and of Rascal, and of the forester. I would listen to nothing; I hastened by.

I walked into the garden, my bosom trembling with the alarm of expectation. A laugh approached me. I shook,

looked eagerly around me, but could perceive nobody. I moved farther forward, and a noise as of the pacing of human feet seemed near me. Still I could see nothing. I thought my ears were deceived; but it was early, nobody was in Count Peter's arbour—the garden was empty. I rambled over the familiar paths until I came near to the mansion. I heard the same sound more distinctly. I sat down with a sorrowful heart upon a bank immediately opposite the front door, in a sunny spot. It appeared to me as if I heard the invisible imp laughing insultingly. The key was turned in the door, which opened, and the forest-master walked out with papers in his hand. I felt something like a mist around my eyes I looked round, and, oh, horrible! the man in the grey coat was sitting close to me, looking on me with a satanic smile. He had drawn his wishing-cap over my head. At his feet my shadow and his own lay peacefully one against the other. He was playing carelessly with the well-known parchment which he held in his hand, and while the forest-master was walking backwards and forwards in the shade of the arbour, he bent himself familiarly to my ear, and whispered to me these words:—

"Now, then, you have at last accepted my offer, and so we sit two heads under one cap. Very good! very good! But pray give me my charm again—you do not want it any more, and are too honourable a man to keep what does not belong to you. No, thanks; I assure you I lent it you from my heart." He took it gently from my hand, put it into his pocket, laughed insultingly at me, and so loudly that the forest-master looked round, attracted by the noise. I sat there as if I had been petrified.

"You must agree," he rejoined, "that such a cap is much more convenient. It does not cover its possessor alone, but his shadow also, and as many people besides as he likes to have with him. Look, now; to-day I get two of ye." He laughed again. "You must know, Schlemihl, that what is not done by fair means at first may be enforced at last. I

still thought you would have bought the trifle. Take back your bride (there is yet time); and send Rascal to swing on the gallows; that is an easy matter while we have a rope at hand. Hearken, I give you the cup into the bargain."

The mother came forth, and this conversation followed. "What is my Mina doing?"—"Weeping."—"Simple child! but can it not be altered?"—"No, indeed."—"But to give her so soon to another. Oh, husband, you are cruel to your own child!"—"Mother, you don't see clearly. Even before she has wept out her childish tears, when she finds herself the wife of a rich and noble man, she will be consoled from her sorrows, as if awakened from a dream. She will thank Heaven and us; and that you will see."—"God grant it! She already possesses a pretty handsome dowry; but after the noise made by that unfortunate adventurer, do you believe so brilliant a proposal as Mr. Rascal's will soon or easily be found? Do you know what wealth he possesses?"—"He has six million florins in landed property in this country paid for in cash, free from all encumbrances. I have the writings in hand. It was he who forestalled me always in the best purchases. Besides this, he has bills of exchange in his portfolio on Mr. Thomas Jones for above three millions and a half of florins."—"He must have pilfered at a pretty rate."—"That's all nonsense! He has hoarded wisely, where others foolishly squandered."—"But a man who has worn a livery!"—"Folly! he has an irreproachable shadow!"—"You are right, but——"

The man in the grey coat laughed and looked full in my face. The door opened, and Mina came out. She was supporting herself on her maid's arm; silent tears were flowing over her pale and lovely cheeks. She sat down in a chair placed for her under the lime trees, and her father seated himself beside her. He gently seized her hand, and while she wept still more bitterly, addressed her in the gentlest accents.

"Thou art my best, my dearest child; thou wilt be

prudent too; thou wilt not grieve thy old father, who only thinks of making thee happy. I well understand, my sweet girl, that this has sadly shaken thee; though thou hast wonderfully escaped from misery. Before the shameless cheat was unveiled thou lovedst that unworthy one most affectionately. I know it, Mina, but I do not reproach thee. I, too, loved him, while I deemed him to be a rich and noble man. But thou hast seen in what it ended. The veriest vagabond has his own shadow; and shall my beloved, my only daughter, be married to——? Oh, no, thou thinkest of him no more. Listen, my Mina: a lover addresses thee who does not dread the sun, an honourable man—who is no Count, indeed, but who possesses ten millions, ten times more than thou hast ever possessed, a man who will make my beloved child happy. Do not oppose me; make no reply; be my good, obedient daughter. Let the affectionate father care for thee, and dry thy eyes. Promise to give thy hand to Mr Rascal; say, wilt thou promise me?"

She answered with a sighing voice, "I have no farther will nor wish on earth; let my father's will be accomplished!" On this Mr. Rascal was announced, and daringly joined the circle. Mina lay in a swoon. My hated evil genius fixed his eyes angrily on me, and whispered in these rapid words, "Can you bear *that* too? What runs in your veins instead of blood?" With a swift motion he made a slight wound in my hand—blood gushed forth. He cried, "Red blood, truly! Sign." The parchment and the pen were in my hand.

VII

I shall expose myself, dear Chamisso, to your criticism, and not seek to elude it. I have long visited myself with the heaviest judgment, for I have fed the devouring worm in my heart. This terrible moment of my existence is ever-

lastingly present to my soul, and I can contemplate it only with a doubting glance, with humility and contrition. My friend, he who carelessly takes a step out of the straight path is imperceptibly impelled into another course, in which he will be deluded farther and farther astray. For him in vain the pole-star twinkles in the heavens; there is no choice for him—he must slide down the declivity and offer himself up to Nemesis. After the false and precipitate step which had brought down the curse upon me, I had daringly thrust myself upon the fate of another being. What now remained, but where I had sowed perdition, and prompt salvation was urgent, again blindly to rush forward to save? For the last knell had tolled. Do not think so basely of me, my Chamisso, as to imagine that I should have thought any price too dear, or should have been more sparing with my gold. No; but my soul was filled with unconquerable hatred towards this mysterious sneaker in crooked paths. Perhaps I might be unjust to him, yet my mind revolted against all communication with him. But here, as often in my life, and generally in the history of the world, an accident determined rather than an intention. Afterwards I became reconciled to myself. I learnt, in the first place, to respect necessity and those accidents which are yet more the result of necessity than any will of our own. Then was I also taught to obey this necessity, as a wise arrangement of Providence, which sets all this machinery in action, in which we only co-operate by moving and setting other wheels in motion What must be, will happen; what should have been, was; and not without the intervention of that Providence which I at last learnt to reverence in my fate and the fate of her who controlled mine.

I know not if I should ascribe it to the strain of my soul under the pressure of such mighty emotions, or to the exhaustion of my physical strength, weakened by the unwonted abstinence of the days gone by, or to that fatal agitation which the approach of this grey adversary produced

through my whole frame—certain it is that while preparing to sign I fell into a deep swoon, and lay a long time as in the arms of death.

On coming to my recollection, the first tones that reached my ears were the stamping of feet and cursing. I opened my eyes. It was dark, my hated companion was there holding me, but scolding thus: "Now, is not that behaving like a silly old woman? Let the gentleman rise up, conclude the business as he intended; or perhaps he has other thoughts—would like still to weep." With difficulty I raised myself from the ground where I lay, and looked silently around me. The evening was advanced. Festive music broke from the brightly-lighted forest-house, and groups of company were scattered over the garden walks. Some drew near, who were engaged in conversation, and seated themselves on the bench. They spoke of the nuptials of the daughter of the house with the rich Mr. Rascal. They had taken place in the morning—all, all was over.

I struck away with my hand from my head the wishing-cap of the instantly vanishing unknown one, and fled in silence to conceal myself in the deepest darkness of the wood, hurrying to the garden gate before Count Peter's arbour. But my evil genius accompanied me unseen, pursuing me with bitter words. "This, then, is the reward one is to get for the trouble of taking care, through the livelong day, of the nervous gentleman! And I am then to be fooled at last! Very well, very well, Mr. Wronghead: fly from me, but we are inseparable. You have my gold, and I your shadow; they leave no rest to either. Did anybody ever hear of a shadow abandoning its master? Yours draws me after you, till you condescend to take it again, and I get rid of it. What you have sold, or neglected to do, of your own free-will, that will you be compelled to repair with repugnance and weariness; man cannot oppose his destiny." He continued to talk in the same tone. I fled from him in vain—he was always behind me—present—and speaking

sneeringly of gold and shadow. I could not repose on a single thought.

Through untrodden, vacant streets, I hastened to my abode. I stood before it, looked up, and hardly recognised it. Behind the closed windows no light was burning, the doors were shut, no servants appeared to be moving. He stood behind me, and laughed aloud. "Aye, aye! but your Bendel is certainly at home. He was sent hither so thoroughly exhausted that no doubt he has carefully kept house." He laughed again. "He will have some stories to amuse you. Courage! Good-night for to-day, till an early interview."

I rang again, and a light appeared. Bendel asked from within "who was there?" When he heard my voice the poor fellow could scarcely contain his joy; the door flew open, and we lay weeping in each other's arms. He was greatly changed—weak and ill. My hair had become wholly grey.

He led me through the vacant chambers to an inner apartment which remained furnished. He fetched meat and drink. We sat down. He again began to weep. He then told me that he had lately beaten the grey-clad meagre man, whom he had met with my shadow, so lustily and so long that he lost all trace of me, and sunk exhausted to the earth; that afterwards, not being able to discover me, he had returned home, and the mob, excited by Rascal, had raised a tumult, broken the windows of the house, and given full rein to their love of destruction. Thus they had rewarded their benefactors. One after another had my servants fled. The police of the place had ordered me to leave the town as a suspicious person, and allowing me only a delay of four-and-twenty hours to quit their territory. He had a great deal to add to what I already knew of Rascal's wealth and espousals. This scoundrel, who had originated all proceedings against me, must have possessed my secret from the beginning. It seemed that, attracted

by the gold, he had forced himself upon me, and had procured a key of that treasure-chest, where he laid the foundation of his fortune, which he now seemed determined to enjoy.

Bendel told me all with abundant tears, and wept anew for joy at seeing me again, again possessing me, and that, after all his fears as to what misfortune might have brought me, he found me bearing everything with calmness and fortitude; for such was the form in which despair reigned over me, while I saw gigantic and unchangeable misery before me. I had wept away all my tears; it could force out no other accent of distress from my bosom. I raised against it coldly and unconcernedly my uncovered head.

"Bendel," said I, "you know my fate. Not without certain guilt does the heavy penalty fall on me. You, innocent being, shall bind no longer your destiny to mine. I will no longer let it be so. To-night I will hasten away. Saddle me my horse—I ride alone. You must remain—I require it. Some chests of gold must yet be here. They are now yours. I shall wander restlessly through the world; but if a happier day should dawn, and bliss should again smile upon me, I will faithfully think of you; for on your faithful bosom I have wept in many a weary, wretched, sorrowful hour."

The honest fellow obeyed with a broken heart this last command of his master. It agonised his soul; but I was deaf to his representations, to his entreaties, blind to his tears. He brought the horse to me, I pressed him while he wept against my breast, sprang into the saddle, and pursued my way under the mantle of night from the grave of my existence; indifferent as to the direction my horse might take. On the earth I had no goal—no wish—no hope.

VIII

A foot-passenger soon joined me, who, after walking some time by my horse's side, begged me, as we were bound the

same way, to be allowed to throw the cloak which he carried on the crupper. I quietly allowed him to do so. He thanked me with a graceful address for this trifling service, praised my horse, and from thence took the opportunity of lauding the happiness and the influence of the wealthy. He went on I know not how, in a sort of soliloquy, for I was only a hearer.

He unfolded his views of life and the world, and soon introduced metaphysics, from whence the word was to emanate which would solve all mysteries. He developed his theme with great distinction, and led forward to its deductions.

You know very well that I have often confessed, since I drove through the school of philosophy, that I do not consider myself as by any means calculated for philosophical speculations, and that I have altogether renounced this branch of study. From that time I have let many things be settled as they could, renounced much which I might have understood or learnt, and, following your counsels by trusting to my innate senses, that voice of the heart. I have gone forwards in my own road as far as I was able. This rhetorician appeared to me to build his firmly cemented edifice with great ability. It seemed to bear on its firm and solid foundation, and stood, as it were, on its own absolute necessity. Then I missed in the edifice what I particularly sought, and it was to me merely a piece of art, whose completeness and decorations served only to delight the eye; but I listened willingly to the eloquent man, who seemed to transfer to himself my observations on my own sorrows; and I should have cheerfully surrendered myself to him, if he would have taken possession of my soul as well as my understanding.

In the meanwhile time passed on, and morning-dawn had imperceptibly brightened heaven. I trembled as I looked around and saw the magnificent colours blending in the east, heralding the ascending sun; and at that hour when

the shadows stretch themselves out in all their extension, no shelter, no protection was to be discovered—and I was not alone! I looked upon my companion and again I trembled: it was even the man in the grey coat.

He smiled at my alarms, and without allowing me to utter a word, began: "Let us then, as is the custom of the world, unite our different advantages for a while: we have always time to separate. The road alongside the mountain, if you have not already thought about it, is the only one which you can prudently take. You dare not descend into the valley; and over the hill you will hardly think of returning, as it would lead you whence you came; and the road in which you are is just mine. I see the uprising sun makes you look pale; I will lend you your shadow while we remain together, and this may induce you to bear my being near to you. Your Bendel is no longer with you, but I will do you good service. You do not love me; I am sorry for it; but you make use of me nothwithstanding The devil is not so black as he is represented. Yesterday you vexed me, 'tis true, but I will bear you no grudge to-day. I have shortened your way thus far, as you must yourself confess; now take your shadow on trial again."

The sun had arisen, travellers were approaching us on the road, and, in spite of an internal repugnance, I accepted his offer. He smiled, and let my shadow fall on the ground; it took its station upon that of my horse, and cheerfully moved forward. My mind was in a strange mood. I rode by a body of country people, who were respectfully making room with their heads uncovered as for a wealthy-looking man. I rode farther, and looked aside with eager eyes and beating heart from my horse, on what was once my shadow; but which I had now borrowed from a stranger—aye, from an enemy.

He came on carelessly by my side, and whistled a tune—he on foot, I on horseback. A dizziness seized me, the temptation was too great; I hastily turned the reins, drove

both spurs into the horse, and thus went off at full speed through a cross road. I could not elope with the shadow; it slipped away when the horse started, and waited on the road for its lawful owner. I was obliged to turn round, ashamed. The man in the grey coat, as he unconcernedly finished his tune, began to laugh at me, and fixing the shadow again in its place, informed me it would only stick to me, and remain with me, when I had properly and lawfully become possessed of it. "I hold you fast," he cried, "fast attached to the shadow: you cannot escape from me. A wealthy man like you may want a shadow, likely enough; and you are to blame for not having earlier looked into the matter."

I continued my journey on the same road as before. I possessed all the comforts of life, all its luxuries. I could move about freely and easily; and I possessed a shadow too, though but a borrowed one, and I imposed that reverence everywhere which wealth commands; but death was at my heart. My marvellous conductor, who represented himself to be the unworthy slave of the richest man in the world, had extraordinary readiness as a servant, was exceedingly dexterous and clever, the very model of a valet for a wealthy gentleman; but he never separated himself from my side, and incessantly plagued me, exhibiting the greatest assurance in order that I should conclude the bargain with him respecting the shadow, if it were only to get rid of him. He was as troublesome as hateful to me; I always stood in awe of him. I had made myself dependent on him. I was still in his power, and he had again driven me into the vanities of the world which I had abandoned. I was compelled to allow his eloquence full mastery over me, and almost felt he was in the right. A wealthy man ought to have a shadow in the world; and so long as I wished to occupy that station which he had induced me to fill, there was only one outlet for me. But on this I determined—having sacrificed my love, and made my existence

a curse, I would not transfer my soul to this being—no, not for all the shadows in the world; but I knew not how it would end.

One day we were sitting before a cave, which the travellers who had to cross the mountains were accustomed to visit. There the noise was heard of subterraneous streams roaring from unmeasurable deeps, and the stone that was thrown into the abyss seemed in its echoing fall to find no bottom. He depicted to me, as he had often done, with a luxuriant fancy, and in the glowing charms of the brightest colouring, careful and detailed pictures of the brilliant figure I might make in the world by means of my purse, if I had only my shadow again in my possession. My elbows were supported on my knees while I covered my face with my hands, listening to the evil one, my heart twice rent between temptation and my own earnest will. Such internal discord I could no longer endure, and the decisive struggle began.

"You seem to forget, good sir, that I have only allowed you to remain in my company on certain conditions, and that I retain for myself my unrestrained liberty."—"If you order me I shall move off," the threat was one to which he was accustomed.—I ceased. He sat himself quietly down, and began to roll up my shadow. I grew pale, but I stood dumb while he did so. There was a long silence. He thus broke it:

"You cannot endure me, sir—you hate me. I know it. But why do you hate me? Is it because, when you attacked me on the highway, you attempted to steal my charm by force; or is it because you endeavoured fraudulently to get possessed of my property, the shadow, which had been confided to your simple honour? For myself, I do not hate you for that; it is quite natural you should seek to turn your advantages, your cunning, your strength to good account. That you have the most rigid principles, and are honesty itself, is a hobby-horse belief of your own, to which I can have no objection. My notions are not so strict as

yours: I only act according to your notions. But did I ever attempt to strangle you in order to possess your valuable soul, to which I really have a great liking? Have I, for the sake of my bartered purse, let loose a servant upon you, and endeavoured to run away with it?" I could answer nothing to all this; and he continued: "Well then, sir, well! You cannot endure me—I understand it, and am not displeased with you for that. It is clear we must part, and you really are becoming very tedious to me. But to get rid of my perplexing presence altogether for the future, I will give you a piece of advice—buy the thing of me!" I held out the purse to him. "At the price?" "No!" I sighed deeply, and began again: "Well, then, I insist upon it, we must part—do not stop up my way any longer in the world, which is wide enough for both of us." He smiled and replied: "I go, sir; but I will first instruct you how to summon me when you wish for the presence of your most humble slave: you only need to shake your purse, that its exhaustless pieces may tinkle—the sound will draw me instantly to you. Everybody in this world thinks of his own interests; you see, I was also attending to yours—for I give you spontaneously a new power. Excellent purse! And even if the moths had devoured your shadow, there would be a strong bond of union between us. But enough;—you possess me while you possess my gold; however distant, command your servant—you know I am always ready to do honour to my friends, and that I have for the wealthy an especial regard—that you yourself have seen. But as for your shadow, sir, allow me to assure you your shadow will never be yours, but on one condition."

Visions of old time floated in my soul. I inquired hastily: "Did Mr. Jones give his signature?" He smiled. "With so good a friend it was not necessary." "Where is he—where? By heavens I will know!" He put his hand slowly into his pocket, and drew out by the hair the pale and ghastly form of Thomas Jones. Its blue and deadly lips

trembled with the dreadful words: "*Justo judicio Dei Judicatus sum, Justo judicio, Dei condemnatus sum.*" I was horror-struck. I dashed the clinking purse hastily into the abyss and uttered these last words. "I conjure thee, in the name of God, monster, begone, and never again appear before these eyes." He rose up with a gloomy frown, and vanished immediately behind the dark masses of rocks which surrounded that wild and savage place.

IX

I sat there shadowless and penniless; but a heavy weight had been removed from my bosom, and I was calm. Had I not lost my love, or had that loss left me free from self-reproach, I believe I might have been happy; but I knew not what steps I should take. I searched my pockets, and found that a few pieces of gold remained to me. I counted them smilingly. I had left my horse at the inn below. I was ashamed to return there, at least till the setting of the sun—and the sun was high in the heavens. I laid myself down in the shade of a neighbouring tree and fell quickly asleep.

The sweetest images danced cheerfully around me in my delightful dreams. Mina, crowned with a garland of flowers, hovered over me, and cheered me with an affectionate smile. The noble Bendel was there too, weaving a flowery wreath, and approaching me with a friendly greeting. Many others were also there, and among them methought I saw even thee, Chamisso, in the distant crowd. A bright light shone, but there were no shadows; and, what was more singular, all appeared happy. Flowers and songs, and love and joy, under groves of palms. I could hardly realise, understand, or point out the flitting, swiftly dispersed, and lovely forms; but I enjoyed such visions I would fain not awake. But I awoke—though I kept my eyes closed that

the vanishing dreams might play a little longer round my soul.

But I opened my eyes at last. The sun was in the heavens, but in the east; I had slept through the night. I took this for a sign that I ought not to return to the inn. I willingly abandoned that which I had so lately left there, and determined to take a by-road on foot, which led through the forest-girded base of the hill, leaving it to fate to determine what might be my lot. I looked not back; I thought not even of applying to Bendel, whom I had left in wealth behind me, which I might so easily have done. I began to consider what new character I should assume in the world. My appearance was very unpretending: I wore an old black coat, which I had formerly worn in Berlin, which, I know not how, I had taken for this journey. I had only a travelling-cap on my head, and a pair of worn-out boots on my feet. I rose up, cut a knobbed stick from the spot as a sort of memento, and began my wanderings.

I overtook an old peasant in the wood, who greeted me with great kindness and with whom I entered into conversation. I first inquired, like a curious traveller, about the road, then about the neighbourhood and its inhabitants, the productions of the mountain, and such matters. We came to the bed of a mountain stream, which had spread its devastations over a wide part of the forest. I shuddered inwardly before the wide sunny place, and let the countryman precede me. He, however, stood still in the middle of the frightful spot, and turned round towards me, in order to give me the history of the overflow. He soon observed what was wanting, and stopped in the middle of his narrative to say: "But how is this—the gentleman has got no shadow!"

"Alas! alas!" I replied with a sigh, "I had a long and dreadful illness, and lost my hair, my nails, and my shadow! Look, father, at my time of life, my hair, which has grown again, quite white, my nails sadly short, and my shadow is not yet springing forth."—"Aye! aye," said the old man,

shaking his head, "no shadow! that's odd—the gentleman must have had a sad illness!" But he did not go on with his story, and at the next cross path he glided away from me without saying a word. Bitter tears trembled again on my cheeks—all my serenity was gone. With a heavy heart I moved forwards, and sought the society of man no longer. I concealed myself in the thickest of the forest, and was often obliged to wait for hours in order to get over sunny spots even when no human eye forbad my progress; in the evening I sought a retreat in the villages. At last I bent my course towards a mine in the mountain, where I hoped to find employment underground; for besides that my situation required me even to procure my daily bread, I clearly perceived nothing but the most laborious toil would be any protection from my convulsive thoughts.

A couple of rainy days helped me far on my way, but at the cost of my boots, whose soles were made to suit Count Peter, and not a running footman; I soon walked on my naked feet, and was obliged to procure another pair of boots. The next morning I attended earnestly to this affair in a village, where a fair was held, and where old and new boots were exposed in a shop for sale. I selected and bargained for a long time. I was obliged to abandon a new pair which I wished to possess—I was frightened at the extravagant price, and satisfied myself, therefore, with old ones, which were yet firm and strong, and which the fair and light-haired shop-boy handed to me for my ready cash with a smile, while he wished me a prosperous journey. I put them on immediately and went away through a door which lay to the north.

I was lost in my own thoughts, and hardly observed where I put my foot—for I was still planning about the mine, whither I hoped to arrive by the evening, and hardly knew how I should manage to introduce myself there. I had not advanced two hundred paces ere I discovered that I had lost my way. I looked round and found myself in an antique and desert wood of firs, to the roots of which it

appeared the axe had never been laid. I still hastened onwards a few steps, and perceived I was among dreary rocks, surrounded only by moss and stones, between which lay piles of snow and ice. The wind was extremely cold, and when I looked round, the forest had wholly disappeared. Yet a few paces forward, the stillness of death possessed me—the ice on which I stood stretched boundlessly before me—a dark mist hung over it—the red sun looked from the edge of the horizon. The cold was intolerable. I knew not how it happened, but the benumbing frost forced me to accelerate my steps. I heard the roar of distant waters. Another bewildered step, and I was on the ice-borders of the ocean. Countless herds of seals dashed splashing into the stream. I followed the seashore and saw again naked rocks, land—forests of birch and pine trees I moved forwards for a few minutes. It was burning hot, around me were richly cultivated rice-fields under mulberry trees, in whose shadow I sat down, and, looking at my watch, found it was less than a quarter of an hour since I left the village. I fancied I was dreaming. I bit my tongue to awake myself, and I was aroused most thoroughly. I closed my eyes in order to assemble my thoughts. I heard strange nasal sounds. I looked around. Two Chinese, whose Asiatic countenances I could not mistake, were saluting me according to the custom of their country, and in their own language. I arose and walked back two steps. I saw them no longer. The landscape was wholly changed —trees and woods had succeeded to the rice-fields. I looked pensively on the trees and plants which were blooming around me, and saw that they were the productions of South-eastern Asia. I went towards a tree, and all was again changed. I walked forwards like a drilled recruit, with slow paces. Wonderful varieties of countries, fields, meadows, mountains, wastes, and sandy deserts rolled along before my astounded sight. Doubtless I had the seventeen league boots on my legs.

X

I fell down on my knees in speechless devotion, and shed tears of gratitude—my future destiny seemed bright in my soul. Shut out from human society by my early guilt, Nature, which I had ever loved, was given me for my enjoyment, spread out like a rich garden before me, an object of study for the guide and strength of my life, of which science was to be the end. It was no decision of my own. What then appeared bright and perfect in my inner thoughts I have since endeavoured to describe with calm, earnest, unremitting diligence, and my happiness has depended on the intensity of my recollections.

I rose up hastily, in order that I might by a rapid survey take possession of the field in which I wished to make my harvest. I stood upon the mountains of Thibet, and the sun, which had risen a few hours before, was now sinking in the evening sky. I journeyed from the east towards the west of Asia, overtaking the sun in his progress, and passed the boundaries of Africa. I looked round with great curiosity, and crossed it in all directions. As I glanced over the old pyramids and temples of Egypt, I observed in the deserts near the hundred-gated Thebes, the caverns once occupied by Christian anchorites. Instantly it occurred impressively and distinctly to me, There is thy abode. I chose one of the most concealed, which was at the same time roomy, convenient and inaccessible to the jackals, for my future dwelling, and moved forward with my staff.

I passed into Europe by the Pillars of Hercules, and after I had taken a rapid survey of its southern and northern provinces, I hastened to North Asia, and thence over the polar glaciers to Greenland and America. I rambled through both parts of that continent, and the winter which had begun to reign in the south now drove me quickly back northwards from Cape Horn.

I lingered till the day dawned in eastern Asia, and after a

short repose again entered on my wanderings. I followed the chains of mountains, some of the highest elevations known in our globe, through the two Americas. I trod slowly and prudently from height to height, now over flaming volcanoes, and now over snowy cupolas. I was often almost breathless with weariness, but I reached the Elias mountain and sprung to Asia across Behring's Straits. I pursued the western coast in its numerous windings, and endeavoured to ascertain by special observation which of the islands in the neighbourhood were accessible to me. From the Malacca peninsula my boots took me to Sumatra, Java, Balli, and Lamboc. I endeavoured, often with peril, and always in vain, to find a north-west passage over the inlets and the rocks with which the ocean is studded to Borneo and the other islands of the Eastern Archipelago, but I was obliged to abandon the hope. I sat down at last on the farthest verge of Lamboc, and turning my eyes to the south and east, I wept as if within the gates of a prison, that I could proceed no farther. New Holland, that extraordinary country so essentially necessary to understanding the philosophy of the earth, and its sun-embroidered dress, the vegetable and the animal world; and the South Sea with its Zoophyte islands, were interdicted to me; and thus everything on which I would have gathered together and erected my hopes were condemned to be left a mere fragment, even in its very origin. Oh, my Adalbert! such is the reward for all the labours of man!

In the coldest winter of the southern hemisphere have I stood on Cape Horn, meditating on the two hundred paces, or thereabouts, which divided me from New Holland and Van Diemen's Land—careless about the means of returning, and indifferent even though that frightful land should lie over me like the cover of my bier. I attempted to cross the polar glaciers towards the west, and, with foolishly daring yet desponding steps, to pass upon the floating ice, braving the frost and the waves. In vain—I have never yet been in

New Holland. I returned again to Lamboc. Again I sat myself on the outer verge, my face turned to the south and east, and wept again, as if at the fast-closed iron window of my prison.

I rose up at last from the spot, and with a dejected heart journeyed to the interior of Asia. I hastened onwards, perceiving the daybreak towards the west, and at night reached my before-described abode in Thebes, which I had just looked into the previous afternoon.

As soon as I had taken some repose, and the day had dawned upon Europe, my first care was to provide for my necessities. First, stop-shoes, for I had discovered that, however inconvenient it might be, there was no way of shortening my pace in order to move conveniently in my immediate neighbourhood, except by drawing off my boots. A pair of slippers, however, produced the wished-for effect, and henceforward I always took care to be provided with a couple of pair, as I often threw one pair away if I had not time to lay hold of them, when the approach of lions, men, or hyaenas interrupted my botanising. My excellent watch was an admirable chronometer to me for the short period of my peregrinations; but I required a sextant, some philosophical instruments, and books.

In order to obtain all these things I made some tedious journeys to London and Paris, which were both overshadowed by friendly fogs. As I had exhausted the remainder of my magic-gold, I brought with me some easily-obtained African elephants' teeth for the purposes of payment, though I was obliged to choose the smallest among them, that they might not be too much for my strength. I was soon supplied and stocked with everything I required, and began my new mode of life as a retired philosopher.

I journeyed the east, now measuring its mountains, now the temperature of its streams, and of its air; now observing its animals, now examining its plants. I hastened from the equator to the pole, from one world to another, comparing

experience with experience. The eggs of the African ostrich, or the northern sea-fowl, and fruits, especially tropical palms and bananas, were my usual refreshments. Instead of my departed fortune I enjoyed my *Nicotiana*—it served instead of the good opinion of mankind, and then my affections—I had the love of a little dog, that watched my Theban cave, and when I returned to it laden with new treasures sprang forwards to meet me, making me feel the spirit of humanity within me, and that I was not quite alone on the earth. But, notwithstanding this, calamity was yet to drive me back to the haunts of men!

XI

Once, being on the northern coast, having drawn on my boots while I was gathering together my straggling plants and seaweeds, a white bear approached unawares the verge of the rock on which I stood. I wished to throw off my slippers and just move to an adjacent island, which I expected to reach, over a rock whose head towered above the waves. With one foot I reached the rock; I stretched out the other and fell into the sea: I had not observed that my foot was only half released from the slipper.

Overpowered by the tremendous cold, I had the greatest difficulty in rescuing my life from this peril; but as soon as I reached the land I hurried off to the wastes of Lybia to dry myself there in the sun. I had, however, scarcely set foot ere the burning heat so oppressed my head that I reeled back to the north, very ill. I sought relief in rapid movements, and with uncertain and hurried steps I hastened from the west to the east, and from the east to the west. I placed myself in the most rapid vicissitudes of day and night, now in the heats of summer, and now in the winter's cold.

I know not how long I thus wandered over the earth. A burning fever glowed through my veins, and with dreadful agony I perceived my intellects abandoning me. Mis-

fortune would have it that I should carelessly tread on a traveller's heel. I must have hurt him, for I received a violent blow. I staggered, and fell.

When I recovered my senses I was comfortably stretched on an excellent bed, which stood among many others in a roomy and handsome apartment. Somebody was sitting near my pillow; many persons passed through the hall going from one bed to another. They stood before mine, and I was the subject of their conversation. They called me *Number Twelve*, and on the wall at the foot of my bed that number certainly stood—it was no illusion, for I could read it most distinctly. There was a black marble slab, on which was inscribed, in large golden letters, my name,

PETER SCHLEMIHL,

quite correctly written. On the slab under my name were two lines of letters, but I was too weak to connect them, and closed my eyes again.

I heard something of which Peter Schlemihl was the subject, loudly and distinctly uttered, but I could not collect the meaning. I saw a friendly man and a beautiful woman in black apparel standing before my bed. Their forms were not strangers to me, though I could not recognise them.

Some time passed by, and I gradually gathered strength. I was called Number Twelve, and Number Twelve, by virtue of his long beard, passed off for a Jew, but was not the less attended to on that account. Nobody seemed to notice that he had no shadow. My boots were, as I was assured, to be found, with everything else that had been discovered with me, in good and safe keeping, and ready to be delivered to me on my recovery. The place in which I lay ill was called the *Schlemihlium*; and there was a daily exhortation to pray for Peter Schlemihl, as the founder and benefactor of the hospital. The friendly man whom I

had seen at my bedside was Bendel; the lovely woman was Mina.

I lived peaceably in the *Schlemihlium*, quite unknown, but I discovered that I was in Bendel's native place, and that he had built this hospital with the remainder of my once unhallowed gold. The unfortunate blessed me daily, for he had built it in my name, and conducted it wholly under his own inspection. Mina was a widow : an unlucky criminal process had cost Mr. Rascal his life, and taken from her the greater part of her property. Her parents were no more. She dwelt here like a pious widow, and dedicated herself to works of charity.

She was once conversing with Mr. Bendel near the bed No. 12. "Why, noble woman, expose yourself to the bad air which is so prevalent here? Is your fate then so dreary that you long for death?"—"No, Mr. Bendel, since I have dreamt out my long dreams, and my inner-self was awakened, all is well—death is neither the object of my hopes nor fears. Since then I think calmly of the past and of the future. And you—do you not serve your master and friend in this god-like manner, with sweet and silent satisfaction?"—"Yes, noble woman, God be praised! Ours has been a marvellous destiny. From our full cup we have thoughtlessly drunk much joy and much bitter sorrow. 'Tis empty now. Hitherto we have only had a trial; now, with prudent solicitude, we wait for the real introduction to substantial things. Far different is the true beginning. But who would play over again the early game of life? Though it is a blessing, on the whole, to have lived, I am supported by the conviction that our old friend is better provided for now than then." "I feel it too," answered the lovely widow, and they left me.

This conversation had produced a deep impression within me, but I doubted in my mind if I should discover, or set out unknown from thence. I decided, however; I ordered paper and pencil to be brought to me, and wrote these words:

"Your old friend too is better provided for than formerly, and if he do penance it is the penance of reconciliation."

On this, finding myself better, I desired to dress myself. The keys were deposited on the little trunk which stood close to my bed. I found in it everything that belonged to me. I put on my clothes, hung over my black coat my botanical case, where I found again my transport, my northern plants. I drew on my boots, laid the note which I had written on my bed, and when the door opened was far on my way towards Thebes.

A long time ago, as I was tracing back my way homewards along the Syrian coast, the last time I had wandered from my dwelling, I saw my poor Figaro approaching me. This charming spaniel seemed to wish to follow the steps of his master, whom he must have so long waited for. I stood still and called him to me. He sprang barking towards me, with a thousand striking expressions of his innocent and extravagant joy. I took him under my arm, for in truth he could not follow me, and brought him with me safely home.

I found everything thus in order, and returned again, as my strength returned, to my former engagements and habits of life. And now for a whole twelvemonth I have refrained from exposing myself to the unbearable winter's cold.

And thus, my beloved Chamisso, thus do I yet live. My boots have not lost their virtues as the very learned tome of Tieckius, *De rebus gestis Pollicilli*, gave me reason to apprehend. Its power is unbroken; but my strength is failing, though I have confidence I have applied them to their end, and not fruitlessly. I have learned, more profoundly than any man before me, everything respecting the earth: its figure, heights, temperature; its atmosphere in all its changes; the appearances of its magnetic strength; its productions, especially of the vegetable world—all in every part whither my boots would carry me. I have published the facts, clearly arranged, with all possible accuracy, in

different works, with my ideas and conclusions set down in various treatises. I have established the geography of interior Africa and of the North Pole, of internal Asia and its eastern coasts. My *Historia sterpium plantarum utruisque orbis* has appeared, being but a large fragment of my *Flora universalis terrae*, and a companion to my *Systema naturae*. In the belief that I have not only increased the number of known species more than a third (moderately speaking), but have thrown some light on the general system of Nature and the geography of plants, I am now busily engaged with my Fauna. I will take care before my death that my MSS. be disposed in the Berlin University.

And you, my beloved Chamisso, you have I chosen for the keeper of my marvellous history, which, when I shall have vanished from the earth, may tend to the improvement of many of its inhabitants. But, my friend, while you live among mankind, learn above all things first to reverence your shadow, and next your money. If you will only live for Chamisso and his better self, you need no counsel of mine.

EXPLICIT

JOHANN GUSTAV BÜSCHING

(1783–1829)

HISTORY OF COUNT WALTER AND THE LADY HELGUNDA

(Translated by THOMAS ROSCOE)

IN old times there was a very celebrated city in Poland, defended with walls both high and strong, named Wislictz, one of whose Governors, during the heathen ages, was called Wisland the Handsome, and was descended from the family of King Pepin. Now there was also a certain Count, brave and powerful, belonging to the same stock, called Walter the Strong, whose Castle, Tyniez Kiakau, was situated where the Abbey of St. Benedict, founded by Casimer the Monk, King of Poland, now stands. This Count made war upon the lord of the city; overpowered, and made him prisoner, confining him in chains, under strict guard, in a high tower. He had espoused a noble lady called Helgunda, daughter of a King of the Franks, whom Walter the Strong secretly carried away, not without great danger, as the tradition says, into Poland.

It was as follows: a son of the King of the Alamanni went to the Court of the French King, Helgunda's father, where he was received with great favour, in order to be instructed in knightly accomplishments. Count Walter being a Knight of great penetration and cunning, when he perceived that the bright Helgunda was inclined to turn the light of her eyes upon this young Prince, one night boldly mounted the

battlements of the Castle, bribed the warder, and then began to sing such sweet songs under the chamber of the Princess, that both she and her ladies awoke at the delicious sounds out of their sleep. She sprang from her couch, and along with her companions, shaking off the drowsy heaviness of the night, listened intently to the charmer's strains as long as she could catch their last dying sounds.

Early in the morning Lady Helgunda sent for the warder to learn whether he knew anything of the minstrel who had sung so sweetly the preceding night. Not venturing to betray the brave lord, he protested his entire ignorance of the occurrence; and Lord Walter having with equal craftiness succeeded the two following nights in entertaining her in the same manner, the lady was quite at a loss what to think. She next threatened the warder with the severest punishment if he longer refused to disclose the minstrel's name. As he still hesitated, she condemned him forthwith to suffer death; and the unhappy man was glad to avoid his fate by instantly naming Lord Walter. Upon hearing this, the lady began to feel her love for the young Prince of the Alamanni wax cold; she changed, and became even more warm and irresistible in favour of her new lover, and every day her love increased.

When the Prince discovered the very favourable light in which she regarded his rival, and the cold, repulsive manner in which he was treated, he burnt with rage and scorn; but soon after the two new lovers, being ever on the watch, took advantage of an opportunity to effect their escape. Having set forward on the appointed day, they at length approached the long-wished-for banks of the River Rhine, where the boatmen required from them a mark of gold, which they received, and yet attempted to delay their passage until the arrival of the King's son. Lord Walter, aware of the danger, instantly mounted his horse, and placing the lady behind him, gave him the spurs, dashed into the water, and went across like an arrow from the bow. He had proceeded,

however, a very little way from the opposite bank, when he heard a loud halloo from his pursuers, the Prince's followers, he himself calling in a loud voice, "Wretch, dost thou fly thus secretly with the King's daughter, and think to pass the Rhine without paying toll? Halt thy speed, that we may try the strength of our swords, and let the victor mount the horse of his foeman, and his be his arms, and his be the bride." Lord Walter, hearing him call, without the least fear, replied, "What say'st thou of the King's daughter? The toll is paid with a mark of gold, and the Princess rides along with me, neither seduced nor forced, but of her own free will."

Lord Walter then drew up, and both foemen flew with lance in rest, bitterly, against each other's breasts. Next out sprang their swords, and manfully both combatants laid about them. Casting his eye upon the lovely Helgunda, the Prince of the Alamanni fought with such fury as to compel his rival to measure back his steps until he drew nigh and nigher the affrighted lady; when, stung with shame and love, he summoned all his manhood to the task, and in a fierce onset laid the Prince of the Alamanni dead at his feet. So he took the horse and arms of the deceased, and returned with double triumph to his fair lady; and when arrived at his Castle Tyniez, after many a hard adventure, he gave himself up for a while to the enjoyment of love and peace. He had at length leisure to listen to the grievances of his vassals, who had been greatly oppressed during his absence by Wislaw the Handsome. He brooded over this injury, and sought an opportunity of revenging himself At length he made a sudden and fierce attack, worsted and took Wislaw prisoner, as we have already mentioned, confining him in a tower of his Castle Tyniez.

Not long afterwards, eager for heroic adventures, he set out on a tour through the surrounding country, proposing to lead this chivalric kind of life some time. He had already been absent during two years, when the fair Helgunda,

apprenhensive of the fate of her lord, began to address one of the ladies of her bedchamber in the following terms, at the same time casting down her eyes, " You see I am neither a widow nor a married woman; " and she then dwelt on the happiness of those who are honourably wedded to valiant and faithful lords.

The lady-in-waiting, concerned to see the sorrowful and deserted situation of the Princess, reminded her of their heroic prisoner Wislaw, whose noble and pleasing figure had acquired for him the name of the Handsome, and who had been suffered to languish so long in the solitary tower. This she repeated so frequently, at the same time praising his fine qualities and unmerited sufferings, that the Countess could not resist her curiosity to behold them. He was brought, and then conducted back to the tower, and the same kind of visits continued to be repeated, leading, ere long, to far greater intimacy; neither of them standing in awe of Lord Walter.

Both were now eager to avail themselves of the advice of their confidante; and both, though they felt the stings of conscience, became too impassioned to listen to the dictates of honour, or to consult their safety; the Countess, more especially, being lost in admiration of her lover's handsome person, and passing all her hours in his society. She would no longer permit him to be confined in the tower, but having granted him liberty, she declared she would follow him even to the farthest wilderness, among savage rocks and caves, or face wild beasts of the forest—such was her inextinguishable love for him. Finally, she accompanied him to Wislictz, regardless of her lord's honour, and thus openly uniting her fate to his. By such means Wislaw regained his freedom and his property, flattering himself that he had thus easily reaped a double triumph over his enemy; but he was speedily doomed to be undeceived, in a way he little expected. For at length Lord Walter, weary of heroic achievements, turned the head of his steed once more

homewards. And soon he stood before his Castle gate—at his own door, and holding his gallant war-horse by the rein, he inquired of his people as they flocked around him wherefore the bright Helgunda was not there to greet him home. Then they, trembling, proclaimed the truth—how the captive Wislaw had escaped, by means of Lady Helgunda, from his durance in the tower; how they had associated together, and how they had lastly taken flight.

Filled with rage and disappointment, the gallant lord again turned his horse's head, without entering his Castle, towards Wislictz, leaving his vassals to arm and follow as they chose. He boldly spurred on into the very city of Wislictz, where he found Wislaw busily engaged in preparations for the chase. No sooner did Helgunda behold her lord's entrance into the city than she hastened towards him, fell at his feet, and loudly upbraided Wislaw, declaring that he had carried her off by violence in the night-time, and entreating that he would revenge her wrongs upon the head of that most false robber and ravisher, in which she would lend her utmost aid. With this view she beseeched him to bear her company into the adjoining palace, where, if he would secrete himself in a chamber for a few moments, she vowed to surrender the robber Wislaw, alive, into his hands. The hero gave credit to the words and tears of the wily syren, and followed her into the place she pointed out to him, where she basely delivered him up a prisoner into the power of Wislaw the Handsome. Both then openly insulted the brave Lord Walter by their triumph and rejoicings, compelling him even to become a witness of their endearments, little anticipating that such extravagant delight is not infrequently followed by very disastrous results.

Instead of consigning him, as usual, to a dungeon, his enemy studied how best he might torment him with the sight of his lost Helgunda, as they feasted together in his hall. For this purpose he had him fastened with outspread arms to the wall, his neck and feet supported by iron clasps which

held him in an upright position. In a recess of the same apartment was a couch, in full view of the unhappy lord, where his enemy beguiled the summer hours with caressing the false and adulterous Countess.

The tyrant Wislaw had a sister, whose extreme ugliness and deformity were such as to repel all idea of love, and her he chose as a safe gaoler to aggravate Lord Walter's sufferings, above all other people, by her very sight. But the young woman, finding the prisoner so completely in her power, appeared to take pity upon him, and pity being akin to love, she one day quite unceremoniously inquired of him if he were desirous of having a wife; for in such case she would relieve him from his sufferings by striking off his chains. Lord Walter was glad to promise, and that solemnly, that he would love and cherish her as long as he lived, and conduct himself towards Wislaw, as she insisted, like a good brother-in-law, without strife and quarrelling, as they had hitherto done. He then begged of her to bring her brother's sword in order that she might knock off his chains; and she went; and taking it from the scabbard at his bed's head she returned. He then told her how to loosen the links of the iron chains and bands, and to cut the clasps between his back and the wall, so that, having once his arms at liberty, he could easily effect the rest.

They had warily fixed upon the midnight hour, when Wislaw was reposing by the side of the fair Helgunda on the couch where Lord Walter had so often seen them. That very day had he accosted her as she sat there, in the absence of her paramour, "Thou vile one, how wouldst thou feel were I to stand before thy couch—my sword in my hand—freed from these chains?" Her heart beat with terror at these words; and trembling that night, she turned to Wislaw, crying out in her sleep, "Woe to us, lord—your sword was missing to-day from its sheath; and I have forgotten to lay it under our pillow to-night. How is this?" Hearing her call, Wislaw replied, "And what, love, if he had ten swords,

and ten swordsmen at his side; what would they avail him against his iron bonds, which no art can unclasp, but his who forged them? Be at peace, my love, and sleep."

As he uttered these last words, Lord Walter came bounding like a tiger escaped from his den. He stood with naked uplifted sword before their couch, and reviling them a moment as they lay, the next it fell, with heavy and indignant ire, piercing them asunder at a stroke. It was stained with the adulterous blood of both as it again descended, and both their lives were sacrificed upon the spot before it was returned to its scabbard. Thus they came to their unblessed end; and the monument of Helgunda is still shown at the Castle of Wislictz, to all those who are curious to see it, hewn in massy stone, and bearing the date of 1253.

JACOB LUDWIG GRIMM

(1785–1863)

AND

WILHELM KARL GRIMM

(1786–1859)

I

THE TWELVE DANCING PRINCESSES

(Translated by THOMAS ROSCOE)

THERE was once a King who had twelve lovely daughters. They slept in twelve beds all in one room, and when they went to bed the doors were shut and locked up; but every morning their shoes were found to be quite worn through, as if they had been danced in all night, and yet nobody could find how it happened, or where they had been.

Then the King made it known to all the land that if any person could discover the secret, and find out where it was that the Princesses danced at night, he should have the one he liked best for his wife, and should be King after his death; but whoever tried and did not succeed, after three days and nights should be put to death.

A King's son soon came. He was well entertained, and in the evening was taken to the chamber next to the one where the Princesses lay in their twelve beds. There he was to sit and watch where they went to dance; and in order that nothing might pass without his hearing it, the door of his chamber was left open. But the King's son soon fell asleep, and when he awoke in the morning he found that

the Princesses had all been dancing, for the soles of their shoes were worn full of holes. The same thing happened the second and third night; so the King ordered his head to be cut off. After him came several others, but they had all the same luck, and all lost their lives in the same manner.

Now it chanced that an old soldier, who had been wounded in battle and could fight no longer, passed through the country where this King reigned, and as he was travelling through a wood he met an old woman, who asked him where he was going.

"I hardly know where I am going, or what I shall do," said the soldier, "but I think I should like very well to find out where it is that the Princesses dance, and then in time I might be a King." "Well!" said the old dame, "that is no very hard task, only take care not to drink any of the wine which one of the Princesses will bring to you in the evening, and as soon as she leaves you, pretend to be fast asleep." Then she gave him a cloak and said: "As soon as you put that on, you will become invisible, and you will then be able to follow the Princesses wherever they go."

When the soldier heard all this good counsel, he determined to try his luck: so he went to the King and said he was willing to undertake the trial. He was as well received as the others had been, and the King ordered fine royal robes to be given him, and when the evening came he was led to the outward chamber. Just as he was going to lie down, the eldest of the Princesses brought him a cup of wine; but the soldier threw it all away secretly, taking care not to drink a drop. Then he laid himself down on his bed, and in a little time began to snore very loud, as if he was fast asleep. When the twelve Princesses heard this they laughed heartily, and the eldest said, "This fellow too, might have done a wiser thing than lose his life in this way!" Then they rose up and opened their drawers and boxes, and took out all their fine clothes, and dressed themselves at the glass, and skipped about as if they were eager to begin dancing.

But the youngest said, "I don't know how it is, while you are so happy, I feel very uneasy; I am sure some mischance will befall us." "You simpleton," said the eldest, "you are always afraid. Have you forgotten how many Kings' sons have already watched us in vain? And as for this soldier, even if I had not given him his sleeping draught, he would have slept soundly enough."

When they were all ready they went and looked at the soldier; but he snored on and did not stir hand or foot; so they thought they were quite safe, and the eldest went up to her own bed and clapped her hands, and the bed sunk into the floor and a trap-door flew open. The soldier saw them going down through the trap-door one after another, the eldest leading the way; and thinking he had no time to lose, he jumped up and followed them; but in the middle of the stairs he trod on the gown of the youngest princess, and she cried out to her sisters, "All is not right; some one took hold of my gown." "You silly creature," said the eldest, "it is nothing but a nail in the wall."

Then down they all went, and at the bottom they found themselves in a most delightful grove of trees, and the leaves were all of silver, and glittered and sparkled beautifully. The soldier wished to take away some token of the place; so he broke off a little branch, and there came a loud noise from the tree. Then the youngest daughter said again, "I am sure all is not right; did not you hear that noise? That never happened before." But the eldest said, "It is only our Princes, who are shouting for joy at our approach."

Then they came to another grove of trees, where all the leaves were of gold; and afterwards to a third, where the leaves were all glittering diamonds. And the soldier broke a branch from each; and every time there was a loud noise, which made the youngest sister tremble with fear; but the eldest still said it was only the Princes who were crying for joy. So they went on till they came to a great lake; and at the side of the lake there lay twelve little boats with twelve

handsome Princes in them, who seemed to be waiting there for the Princesses.

One of the Princesses went into each boat, and the soldier stepped into the same boat with the youngest. As they were rowing over the lake, the Prince who was in the boat with the youngest Princess and the soldier, said, "I do not know why it is, but though I am rowing with all my might, we do not get on so fast as usual, and I am quite tired; the boat seems very heavy to-day." "It is only the heat of the weather," said the Princess; "I feel it very warm too."

On the other side of the lake stood a fine illuminated Castle, from which came the merry music of horns and trumpets. There they all landed, and went into the Castle, and each Prince danced with his Princess; while the soldier, who was all the while invisible, danced with them too; and when any of the Princesses had a cup of wine set by her, he drank it all up, so that when she put the cup to her mouth it was empty. At this, too, the youngest sister was terribly frightened, but the eldest always silenced her. They danced on till three o'clock in the morning, and then all their shoes were worn out, so that they were obliged to leave off. The Princes rowed them back again over the lake; but this time the soldier placed himself in the boat with the eldest Princess, and on the opposite shore they took leave of each other; the Princesses promising to come again the next night.

When they came to the stairs the soldier ran on before the Princesses and laid himself down; and as the twelve sisters slowly came up, very much tired, they heard him snoring in his bed, so they said: "Now all is quite safe;" then they undressed themselves, put away their fine clothes, pulled off their shoes and went to bed. In the morning the soldier said nothing about what had happened, but determined to see more of this strange adventure, and went again the second and third night; and everything happened just as before; the Princesses danced each time till their shoes were worn to pieces, and then returned home. However,

on the third night, the soldier carried away one of the gold cups as a token of where he had been.

As soon as the time came when he was to declare the secret, he was taken before the King with the three branches and the golden cup; and the twelve Princesses stood listening behind the door to hear what he would say. And when the King asked him, "Where do my twelve daughters dance at night?" he answered, "With twelve Princes in a Castle underground." And then he told the King all that had happened and showed him the three branches and the golden cup which he had brought with him. Then the King called for the Princesses, and asked them whether what the soldier said was true; and when they saw that they were discovered, and that it was of no use to deny what had happened, they confessed it all. And the King asked the soldier which of them he would choose for his wife; and he answered, "I am not very young, so I think I will have the eldest." And they were married that very day, and the soldier was chosen to be the King's heir.

JACOB LUDWIG GRIMM
(1785–1863)

AND

WILHELM KARL GRIMM
(1786–1859)

***

II

THE DOMESTIC GOBLIN HÛTCHEN

(Translated by THOMAS ROSCOE)

AT the Court of Bishop Bernard of Hildesheim sojourned a familiar spirit, who, under the pretext of being serviceable,

appeared in a menial dress to all those whose conduct he approved. He wore a peculiar kind of little hat upon his head, from which he also derived his name, which was borrowed for him from the lower Saxon idiom Hôdeken, whence Hûtchen, by which he is more familiarly known.

He took great pleasure in conversing with and obliging people, rather than playing them tricks, gave them notice of impending danger, and helped at times to do them a good turn. He was extremely sociable, would chat with persons of any rank, answering and inquiring in his turn with perfect ease and propriety.

About the same time there resided at the Castle of Winzenburg a Count Herman, who was in possession of the see as the proprietor of the county. One of his domestics happened to have a beautiful wife, whom he had long followed and persecuted with his addresses, to which, however, she gave no encouragement. But by dint of the vilest and most insidious arts, he at length succeeded in his attempt, adding violence to fraud, at a period when he had despatched her husband to a distance. She stifled her complaint until his return, but then she burst out into the bitterest reproaches, mingled with tears and lamentations, and denounced the author of her sufferings with all the threats his conduct merited. Her husband, believing that such a stain could only be wiped out with the lordly criminal's blood, and having free admittance into his chamber at all hours, sought his opportunity and found it, as the Count lay asleep at the side of his consort. He entered the apartment, charged him with the heinous offence, and when both awakened in the utmost alarm, and before the Count could seize his sword, the injured husband stabbed him to the heart. Mad at beholding this savage deed, the Countess in the agony of her heart uttered these words: "Thou most treacherous villain, thou shalt yet tremble. The child of thy master, yet unborn, shall some time repay this blood upon thee and thine, so that the world shall take a terrific warning from thy fate."

Scarcely had she pronounced these words before the ferocious man, rushing towards her, put her to death upon the spot.

Count Herman of Winzenburg was the last of his family, and the ample territories upon the decease of both him and his consort were left without a successor. It was on the very morrow after the fatal occurrence that the sprite Hûtchen made his appearance before the couch of Bishop Bernard, and awaking him, said: "Get up, old bald-pate, and call a public meeting of thy own people! The whole county and the county see is vacant, its rightful lord and heirs are murdered; and with a little trouble, for wit thou lackest, thou may'st easily add them to thine own diocese." Hearing this, the Bishop rose, called all his Church military hastily together, and taking possession, overran the whole county in such a manner as to induce the Emperor to grant the holy prelate this addition to his spiritual charge, finding that he had already united the two sees, adding the whole of Winzenburg to that of Hildensheim.

There is also another and more ancient tradition current among the people. A certain Count of Winzenburg had two sons, who bore an unnatural enmity to each other. In order to remove the cause of the quarrel, originating in regard to the inheritance, the Bishop invited them to a festival at Hildesheim, it being understood that whichever after their father's death should be first announced to the holy prelate, he was to succeed to the property. When the old Count shortly after died, his eldest son instantly mounted horse and rode hard to visit the Bishop; while the younger, having no steed, was at a loss what to do. It was then Hûtchen came and addressed him thus: "Come, I will assist you! write a letter to the Bishop, and make mention of the succession on your behalf; and I will take care that it gets to him before your brother upon his young steed." So he sat down to write his letter, which the sprite snatched up and carried in all haste over the mountains by a secret path, which brought him in half an hour to the door of the Bishop's palace, long

before the arrival of the elder brother. In this way the sprite obtained for him possession of the paternal estate, and the path he went is extremely difficult to discover, and known to this day by the name of Hûtchen's Run-road.

He continued to appear at intervals in the Bishop's court, and frequently gave him warning of impending dangers and disasters. He also told the fortunes of many distinguished lords, and sometimes he showed himself while he spoke, at others was only heard to speak. Yet he always wore his hat so close over his eyes that no one could get a fair view of his features. He was particularly attentive not to let the city watch fall asleep upon their post, being always at hand to remind remiss people of their duty. He never inflicted any punishment until he had been first provoked; but he did not forgive those who mocked him, being certain to repay them with more than they brought. He was generally fond of assisting the head cook in the Bishop's kitchen, and would jest with him and the other servants. He slept upon a large tray in the cellar, where there is still a hole in which he used to creep. The domestics becoming accustomed to his visits, and no longer holding him in awe, one of the scullion boys had the audacity to mock and irritate him, venturing even to drive him from his haunts by sprinkling water and other tricks by no means pleasant to the sprite. This so much incensed him that he requested the head cook to chastise the boy, in order to cure him of playing off his tricks upon his friend Hûtchen, or that otherwise he must take the law into his own hands. But the Bishop's head cook only laughed and said: "Are you a ghost, and afraid of a scullion lad?" To this Hûtchen replied, "As you do not choose to chastise the impertinence of your boy, I will show you whether I am afraid of doing it myself." Saying which he went away. Not long after, the boy was sitting alone in the kitchen, and had fallen asleep after dinner. Then came the wrathful sprite, and seizing him by the throat, he worried him in a moment. He then hacked him into small pieces, threw him

into a large copper and put it to boil upon the fire. When the cook returned and discovered what were the contents of the saucepan, and found that the goblin had inflicted this judgment upon him by way of retaliation, he began to bestow his maledictions for the loss of his scullion, in no very courtly words. Hûtchen, indignant at the terms he used, came and dispersed all the kitchen utensils in the Bishop's kitchen, and, what was worse, he infected them in such a way that they streamed with poison and blood. And while the cook still persisted in his denunciations of vengeance, just as he was going through the door from the drawbridge, he caught him and plunged him into the precipice below.

Having thus manifested a very vindictive disposition, it was feared that he might be tempted to set the Bishop's house on fire, and both he and his neighbours were in such alarm that the whole city united in setting fresh watch in all parts, and more particularly over the Bishop's castle. For this and other reasons the holy prelate sought to rid himself of his company, and finally compelled him, by dint of exorcism, to retreat.

In addition to these, this familiar sprite was concerned in a variety of other adventures which were productive of less mischief than the former. In Hildesheim dwelt a man who had a very vain and faithless lady for his wife. Being once on the eve of a journey, he said to Hûtchen, "My good friend and familiar, may I beg you will keep a sharp look out while I am away, and see that all goes right; for I am not quite easy about leaving my wife?" This Hûtchen did, and when the lady, on her husband's departure, sent to inform one of her admirers of his absence, she found that whenever they began to converse together a little too freely the sprite interposed in the most effectual manner, not only by making a great outcry, sufficient to bring together all the domestics, but by beating both the parties soundly, whenever they sought to injure the honour of his absent friend. He appeared in a thousand threatening forms, and after frightening her

lover away, he chased her upstairs and besieged her in her own chamber, where he kept her until her husband's return; when the faithful guardian of his trust went to meet him full of congratulations and joy: "I am exceedingly glad to see you, in order to deliver up my painful charge; for I assure you I have had a great deal of trouble, it required my utmost caution to effect it." The grateful husband then inquired his real name. He replied, "I am Hûtchen, to whom you entrusted your wife before you left. But I have only to beg that you will never saddle me with such a laborious task again. I had rather tend all the herds of swine in all Saxony; such is the infernal wickedness, craft, and courage that she possesses."

At another time there happened to be at Hildesheim a certain prelate who had very little learning to boast. But he had wit enough, he thought, with a little influence to boot, to secure his election to a stall at a grand assembly of ecclesiastics, though he entertained some suspicion that his egregious ignorance would be made known. In this extremity Hûtchen came to his assistance, and presented him with a ring—an enchanted ring—which suddenly inspired him with all the learning and wisdom of Solomon himself; insomuch that he was cried up far above all other candidates, and declared by the whole ecclesiastical assembly, one of the greatest ornaments of the church.

JACOB LUDWIG GRIMM
(1785–1863)

AND

WILHELM KARL GRIMM
(1786–1859)

III

THE FAMILIAR OF THE MILL

(Translated by THOMAS ROSCOE)

THERE were once two fellow-students of Rinteln, taking a little tour together on foot. They intended to pass that night in a pretty village, not a great way off, but as a heavy rain came on and the night appeared to be setting in earlier than usual, they determined to proceed no further. Observing that the nearest place of shelter was a mill, not many fields from the place where they stood, they ran across to the mill-house, and, knocking pretty sharply, begged to know if they could obtain a night's lodging. At first the miller would hear nothing of it, until their earnest entreaties at length began to prevail. He hesitated—they preferred their prayer still more urgently—they heard him coming downstairs, and taking admittance for granted, they thanked him very kindly, and then he could not refuse. He led them into a little room, where they saw a tankard and a dish of meat, of which, being extremely hungry, they requested his permission to pay for, and then to partake. But this the miller refused, saying that they were welcome to lie down upon the hard bench, but not to break his bread. "For this dish of meat, and this drink," said he, "belong to the house-goblin, and if you value your lives more than a

single meal, you will have wit to let it alone. In this case you have nothing to fear; and if he should happen to be a little noisy or so in the night, you have only to lie quiet and go to sleep." With these words he left them and shut the door fast behind him.

Though not quite relishing this reception, the two students threw themselves down upon the bench to try to sleep. But in something better than an hour the pangs of hunger assailed one of them so sharply that he rose forthwith and sought for the dish. The other, being a master of arts, warned him to let the devil alone, and leave him what belonged to him. To which the other only replied that he had a better right to it than the devil, for he was sure that he could not be as hungry as he was; and he sat down to the table and ate to his heart's content. He left very few of the devil's vegetables; and then he seized the tankard, and having taken a good draught or two, he felt better, and laid himself down again very quietly to sleep Yet, feeling thirsty once more, he paid his compliments a second time to the tankard, with such effect as to leave the house-goblin very little besides the dregs: then, pronouncing himself a lucky fellow, and blessing his stars, he lay down and fell fast asleep. All went on well and remained perfectly quiet till midnight. But hardly had twelve time to strike, before in came the goblin to supper, with such hideous haste and racket as to waken both the affrighted students at the noise. He bustled round the room once or twice, and then sat down as if to partake of his meal—for he clapped a chair to the table and they heard him pull the dish towards him (and what were then the feelings of the guilty student!). He pushed it from him, as if by no means pleased, and seizing the tankard, swallowed only the dregs, and very quickly threw it down upon the table. He next began his house labours; rubbed the table, and the feet of it very carefully, and afterwards swept the floor with something like a broom all over. Having finished, he applied to the dish and tankard as before, to see if they

were replenished; but again he flung them down. Yet still he persevered in his labours, came to the students' bench; rubbed, polished and dusted as he went along, till he came to the place where they lay. He passed over them, and went on, but took the space that lay between their feet, below, in his way. Having finished, he went over the bench a second time, leaving the students as before; till he came a third time, and stroked the one who had not meddled with his supper very kindly over the head and body, without doing him any injury. But he seized his companion by the legs, pulled him off the bench, knocked him once or twice upon the ground, and then with a loud laugh he ran behind the stove, while the poor student crept back to his place upon the bench. In a quarter of an hour the goblin resumed his labours, exactly in the same manner, not forgetting to inflict vengeance a second time, which every now and then he renewed.

The students at length quitted the bench, stood up, and finding their way to the door, they set up a loud cry for help, which, however, brought no one to their assistance. As a last resource they threw themselves flat upon their faces on the ground, yet their familiar spirit would not let them rest. He repeated the same game over again, kicking the greedy student from one place to another, and laughing heartily at the sport. Incensed at being thus insultingly treated, without having a moment's peace, after receiving a harder kick than he well liked, the student drew his sword, and made some desperate stabs all round the corners of the room; following the voice of the laughing spirit, with the deadliest threats and challenging him to stand out.

Almost exhausted, he then sat down again upon the bench, to lie in wait for his enemy, but the voice all at once ceased, nor was it again renewed.

In the morning, when the miller learned that his advice had not been attended to, and that they had made free with the provisions, he declared that it was quite a providential thing that he had found them both alive.

JACOB LUDWIG GRIMM
(1785–1863)
AND
WILHELM KARL GRIMM
(1786–1859)

✣

IV

HILDEGARD

(Translated by THOMAS ROSCOE)

THE Emperor Charles going upon a campaign, was compelled to leave the side of his beautiful bride Hildegard, who remained behind at his palace. During his absence, his step-brother, named Taland, attempted to seduce the affections of his lovely consort; but, as virtuous as she was beautiful, she resisted all his arts, resolving that she would rather die than submit to stain the honour of her absent lord. But being unprotected, she feigned to listen to his wishes, declaring that when he could present her with a more elegant apartment than that she now occupied, he should take her there. Taland instantly gave orders for the completion of a beautiful and richly-decorated bridal chamber with three grand doors, well secured, and one day invited the fair Queen to accompany him to see it. Hildegard affected to obey him, and following him to the spot, she requested him to show her the way and enter first. He sprang forward with a gratified and respectful air; and the next moment the door closed behind him, fast locked and bolted, without the lovely Queen. "Here," she cried, "you are my prisoner until my husband's return;" and the Queen then went away.

And there, sure enough, she kept the gallant gentleman until the Emperor returned from his victorious campaign over the Saxons; and then, for the first time, taking pity upon him, she listened to his sighs and prayers, believing that she had now inflicted sufficient punishment on his folly, and ordered him to be released.

When he first came to pay his respects to the Emperor, the latter inquired what made him look so very pale and thin. "The cause," replied the wily Taland, "is in the wicked and abandoned conduct of her you call your Queen. When she found that I was inclined to keep too watchful an eye over her during your absence, and that she could give loose to no excesses or extravagances, she had a new building erected for the purpose of confining me." Beholding his emaciated form the Emperor gave credit to his words, and, incensed at the imaginary wickedness and hypocrisy of his Queen, he secretly commanded some of his attendants to throw her into the sea. But the Queen had time to make her escape, and concealed herself in the house of one of her friends. Being discovered, however, the King gave fresh orders for her death. For this purpose she was conducted into a wood; but she encountered on the way a certain noble belonging to the family of Freudenburgh, who was then hastening with a message from the Countess Adelgund to her sister Hildegard.

Learning the extreme peril in which she was, he rescued her from the hands of her vile attendants, and gave them one of his hounds, which they killed, and exhibited its blood to the Emperor as a proof of their fidelity to his orders.

Queen Hildegard having been thus fortunately rescued, joined the company of a noble lady whose name was Rosina von Bodmer, on her way to Rome. Soon she obtained great reputation for her skill in medicine, an art she had exercised during her whole life. In the meanwhile Heaven struck the impious Taland with sudden blindness and leprosy. No one could afford him any relief, till at length he heard that

there then resided a celebrated doctoress at Rome who cured all kind of infirmities. As the Emperor happened to be journeying towards Rome, Taland joined his train, and on his arrival visited the celebrated lady, acquainted her with his name, and entreated her to try her best skill for his restoration to health. He had no suspicion that the lady he was then addressing was the much-injured Queen. The latter declared that he must apply to the priest for relief, confess his sins and repent; and that then probably she could afford him the assistance he desired. Taland went to confession, and again returned to the lady—no other than the Queen—who restored him to perfect health. Both the Pope and the King were greatly astonished at this proof of her art, and ordered her to be introduced into their presence. She excused herself by saying that the day following she was engaged to attend the church of St. Peter's. Thither too they went, and it was then that she made herself known to them, and related the whole of her wonderful adventures, and how she had been betrayed, all which the King listened to and acknowledged with feelings of high gratification. He received her with joy, and restored her to her former rank and place in his affections, while he adjudged the false Taland to death. The Queen, however, so strongly interceded in his behalf, that his life was granted, though he sunk into the utmost contempt and humiliation.

OTTO KARL VON GRAEVEN
("LOTHAR")

(BORN 1790)

I

THE ARCH ROGUE

(Translated by THOMAS ROSCOE)

THERE once lived, years ago, a man known only by the name of the Arch Rogue. By dint of skill in the black art and all arts of imposition, he drove a more flourishing trade than all the rest of the sorcerers of his age. It was his delight to travel from one country to another merely to play upon mankind, and no living soul was secure, either in house or field, nor could properly call them his own.

Now his great reputation for these speedy methods of possessing himself of others' property excited the envy of a certain King of a certain country, who considered them as no less than an invasion of his royal prerogative. He could not sleep a wink, and he despatched troops of soldiers, one after another, with strict orders to arrest him; but all their researches had been in vain. At length, after long meditation, the King said to himself, "Only wait a little, thou villain cut-purse; and yet I will have thee!" So forthwith he issued a manifesto that the royal mercy would be extended to so light-fingered a genius, upon condition that he consented to appear at Court and give specimens of his dexterity for His Majesty's amusement.

One afternoon as the King was standing at his royal window, commanding a fine prospect of woods and dales,

over which a tempest appeared to be just then gathering, some one suddenly clapped him upon the shoulder, and on looking round he saw a very tall, stout, dark-whiskered man close behind him, who said, "Here I am!" "Who are you?" inquired the King. "He whom you look for!" The King uttered an exclamation of surprise, not unmixed with fear, at his amazing assurance, for he was quite alone, and he looked a little dashed. The stranger observing this, said, "Don't be alarmed! only keep your word with me, and I will prove myself quite obedient to your orders, and keep the peace."

This being agreed, the King acquainted his royal consort and the whole Court that the great sleight-of-hand genius had discovered himself; and soon in a full assembly His Majesty proceeded to question him. "And mark what I say," he added, "nor venture to dispute one of my orders. To begin: do you see yon rustic not far from the wood, busy ploughing the field?" The conjuror nodded assent. "Then go," continued the King; "go and rob him of his plough and oxen, without his knowing anything about it!" At the same time he flattered himself that this was not possible, nor conceived how he could possibly set about it in the face of open day; in which case, thought he, I have him in my power, and will make him smart for it.

The conjuror proceeded to the spot; and as the storm appeared to increase, the rain beginning to pour down in torrents, the countryman, letting his oxen rest, ran under a tree for shelter, until the rain should have ceased. Just then he heard a jolly singing in the wood. Such a glorious song he had never before heard in his life. In fact he felt wonderfully enlivened; and as the weather continued to look quite dull and sulky, he said to himself, "Well, where's the harm if I take a glass! Yes, I must see what sport is stirring there," and away he slipped into the wood, still farther and farther in search of the jovial songster; until he followed his nose so long that he could neither see nor hear anything of it at all.

In the meanwhile, the conjuror, that wicked songster in the wood, was not idle. He changed places with the rustic, taking care of the oxen while their master went singing through the wood; and darting out of the thicket, in a few moments he had slashed off the oxen's ears and tails, and stuck them, half hid, in the ploughman's last furrow. He then drove off the beasts pretty sharply towards the palace. In a short time the rustic finds his way out of the wood; looks towards the spot for his oxen, and can see nothing. Then, searching on all sides in the utmost anxiety, he finally comes to examine his last furrow, and beholds, oh horror! the ears and tails of his poor beasts stretched upon the ground. Imagining that the thunderbolt must have struck, and the earth swallowed them up, he poured forth a most dismal lamentation over his lot, roaring aloud till the woods echoed to the sound. When he was tired he bethought himself of running home to find a pick and a spade to dig his unlucky oxen out of the earth again as quick as possible.

As he went he was met by the King and the conjuror, who inquired the occasion of his piteous lamentations. "My oxen, my poor oxen!" cried the boor, and then related all that had happened to him, entreating them to go with him to the place to witness the disaster. The conjuror than said, "Why don't you try whether you can pull the oxen out again by the ears, or by the tail?" With this the rustic, running back, seized one of the tails and, pulling with all his might, it gave way and he fell upon his back. "Thou hast pulled thy beast's tail off," said the conjurer; "try if thou canst succeed better with his ears; if not, thou must even dig for them." Again he pitched himself down in the attempt; while the King laughed very heartily at the sight. But as the worthy man now appeared excessively troubled at his misfortunes, the King promised him another pair of oxen; and the rustic was content.

"You have made good your boast," said the King to

the conjuror, as they returned to the palace; "but now you will have to deal with a more difficult job, so muster your wit and courage. To-night you must steal my favourite charger out of his stable, and let nobody know who it is." So, thought the King, I have trapped him at last, for he will never be able to outwit my Master of the Horse, and all my grooms to boot. To make the matter sure, the King ordered a strong guard, under one of his most careful officers, to be placed round the stable court. They were armed with stout battle-axes, and were enjoined every half-hour to give the word, and pace alternately through the court. In the royal stables others had the like duty to perform; while the Master of the Horse himself was to ride the favourite steed the whole time, having been presented by the King with a gold snuff-box, from which he was to take ample pinches in order to keep himself awake, and to give signal by a loud sneeze that he was awake. He was also armed with a heavy sword with which he was to knock the thief upon the head when he approached. The rogue first arrayed himself in the Master of the Bedchamber's clothes, without his leave. About midnight he proceeded to join the guards, furnished with different kinds of rich wine, saying that the King had sent him to thank them for their cheerful compliance with his orders, that the impostor was already secured, and that his master now permitted them to take a glass, and not to give the word quite so loudly, as Her Majesty had not been able to close her eyes! He then marched into the stables, where he found the Master of the Horse still astride of the royal charger, busily taking snuff and sneezing every now and then. The Master of the Bedchamber poured him out a sparkling glass, to drink to His Majesty's health, who had sent it; and it looked quite too excellent to resist. Both master and guards then began to jest over the Arch Rogue's fate, taking, like good subjects, repeated draughts—all to His Majesty's health. They soon began to experience the soporific effects; they gaped and stretched, sunk gradually

upon the ground and fell asleep. The Master, by dint of fresh pinches, however, was the last to yield; but he too now blinked, stopped the horse, which he had kept upon a good walk, and said, "I am so confoundedly sleepy I can hold it no longer—take you care of the charger for a moment, bind him fast to his stall, and just keep watch." Having uttered these words he fell like a heavy sack of corn upon the floor, and snored aloud. The mighty conjuror took his place upon the horse, gave him whip and spur, and away he galloped through the slumbering guards, through the court gates, and whistled as he went.

Early in the morning, the King, eager to learn the result, hastened to his royal mews, and was a little surprised to find the whole of his guards fast asleep upon the ground; but he saw nothing of his charger. "What is to do here?" he cried in a loud voice. "Get up! rouse, you idle varlets!" At last one of them, opening his eyes, cried out, "The King! the King!" "Aye, true enough, I am here," replied His Majesty, "but my favourite horse is gone. Speak! answer, on the instant!" While the affrighted wretches, calling one to another, rubbed their heavy eyes, the King was examining the stalls once more, and stumbling over his Master of the Horse, turned and gave him some pretty hearty cuffs about the ears. But he only turned upon the other side, and grumbled a little: "Let me alone, you rascal, my royal master's horse is not for you." "Rascal!" then exclaimed the insulted king, "do you know who it is?" and he was just about to call his attendants, when he heard hasty footsteps—and the conjuror stood before him. He was laughing very heartily, and said, "My liege, I have just returned from an airing on your noble horse. He is indeed a fine animal; but once or so I was obliged to give him the switch."

The King felt excessively vexed at the rogue's success; yet he was the more resolved to hit upon something that should bring his fox skin into jeopardy at last. So he

thought, and the next day addressed him thus: "Thy third trial is now about to take place, and if you are clever enough to carry it through, you shall not only have your life and liberty, but a handsome allowance to boot. In the other case you know your fate. Now listen! This very night I command you to rob my Queen consort of her bridal ring, to steal it from her finger, and let no one know the thief or the way of thieving." Thought the King to himself, "Now at least I have caught him; for this is not possible. For how can he devise any means? Well, we shall see."

When night approached, His Majesty caused all the doors in the palace to be fast closed, and a guard to be set at each. He himself, instead of retiring to rest, took his station, well armed, close to the Queen's couch upon an easy-chair.

It was a moonlight night; and about two in the morning the King plainly heard a ladder reared up against the window, and the soft step of a man mounting it, and just as he had reached the top and looked in, the King said: "Let fall!" and the next moment the outside shutter gave way, and something fell with a terrible crash to the ground! "Wit!" exclaimed the King, and ran down into the court, telling his consort he was going to see whether the conjuror had died of the fall! No, he was not dead, but quite as whole and brisk as ever; for he had only dropped a dead body which he had stolen from the gallows into the court below. The moment he heard the King's steps upon the staircase, he replaced the ladder, mounted, and going into the chamber said in the King's voice: "Yes, he is stone dead, so you may now go quietly to sleep; only hand me here your marriage ring, it is too costly, and precious to trust it while you are asleep, in bed." The Queen, here imagining it was her royal consort, instantly gave her diamond ring, without the least suspicion, and in a moment the conjuror was off through the window with it on his finger. Directly after, the King came back. "At last," he said, "I have indeed carried the joke too far. I have repaid him; he is lying there as dead as a

door-nail; he will plague us no more!" "I know that already; you have told me exactly the same thing twice over, though I think it a little hard that you should have required me to give up my ring." "How came you to know anything of that?" inquired His Majesty. "How? from yourself, to be sure," replied his consort; "you informed me the conjuror was dead, and then you asked me for my marriage ring." "I ask for the ring!" exclaimed the King. "Then I suppose you must have given it to him!" continued His Majesty in a tone of great indignation. "And is it even so at last? By all the saints! this is one of the most confounded unmanageable rascals in existence; I never knew anything equal to it;" and he then informed the Queen of the whole affair, though before he arrived at the conclusion of his narration she was fast asleep.

Soon after it was light in the morning the wily conjuror made his appearance; he bowed to the earth three times before the Queen and presented her with the treasure he had purloined. The King, though excessively chagrined, could not refrain laughing at this sight, adding, "Now hear, thou king of arch rogues; I only caught a sight of you through my fingers as you were coming, or you would never have come off so well. As it is, however, let all old grudges be forgiven and forgotten. Only take up your residence for a time at my Court, taking care at the same time that you do not carry your jokes too far; in which case I might find myself compelled, if nothing worse, to withdraw my favour from you."

OTTO KARL VON GRAEVEN
("LOTHAR")
(BORN 1790)

✣

II

CASTLE CHRISTBURG

(Translated by THOMAS ROSCOE)

IT was many years after the famous Tir-hill fight,[1] so fatal to the then existing order of German knighthood, when the magnificent and beautiful castle of Christburg, not far from the city of Dantzic, was laid in a heap of ruins, and so many noble families were compelled to seek a foreign soil, that a poor mendicant, "all tattered and torn," sought refuge under its decayed walls from the bitter blasts. Being unacquainted with the current reports, which bestowed a legion of spirits upon the old uninhabited vaults and other remnants of its former splendour, he built himself a little hut close upon the Castle site, where he intended to close his earthly pilgrimage. Daily and duly, however, he continued to practise his old profession, begging alms in the neighbourhood, and frequently returning richly laden with bread crusts to his solitary dwelling.

About a year had passed over his head, when in one of his evening rambles among the Castle ruins, he remarked a light glimmering through the bushes which overspread its time-worn walls. Indulging no notions of a supernatural kind, he stood still, and peeped through an opening into the vaults below.

[1] The battle took place in the beginning of the eighteenth century.

There in a spacious and lofty cellar he saw a large table, covered with well-filled pitchers, bumpers and bowls. His mouth watered at the delicious sight. "There is neither butler nor lackey that I see," said he to himself, "and who else is likely to refuse me a good draught?" So he quickly found out the door, which had a latch like any other door, and he opened it. Mounting a few steps, he entered into the drinking-room, which was only just light enough for him to see. Other steps at the end of it led into the vaults, which were very dark, and made him a little uncomfortable; but a row of vats stood before him, and he was content.

And behold! he found he was not quite alone; a respectable old man sat at a table in one corner, apparently employed in reckoning. Supposing he had now met with the owner, the intruder saluted him, entreating that he would afford him one glass of wine.

"Yes," answered the man, "drink! take as much as will agree with you, and come again in the morning." His mild manners took the fancy of his guest; he filled a glass of wine, which he four times repeated, and inquired as he went out if he might really venture there again.

"Yes," was the reply, "come when you please, seven times a week; but not twice a day. Be discreet and hold your tongue; you are a lucky fellow."

The beggar went and came again; regaled himself, and drank so much during the next seven days that he had cause to fear it was beginning to make inroads upon his constitution. He then bethought himself of taking only half of his daily allowance and keeping the rest for sale, with the proceeds of which he might buy fresh food and raiment.

A mendicant selling wine was rather a rare sight in the city. His purchasers laughed; all were eager to have a taste, and declaring that it was drink fit for the gods, they showed him the way to the town-house, for it was too good for the palates of ordinary citizens, and the patricians could afford him a good price. So he willingly went; the alder-

man emptied his pitcher, and requesting him to get more of the exact flavour, promised not to haggle with him about the price.

As often as he went with a fresh supply he obtained the same handsome reward; but towards the fifth day they began to inquire as to the source of so rich a spring. His vow of silence luckily occurred to the beggar; he began to invent a story, but as they threatened to chastise him if he did not reveal the whole truth, he threw his pitcher at the alderman's head, and ran as fast as his heels could carry him.

When he next paid a visit to the cellar, it appeared that the old wine merchant who sat reckoning in the corner was acquainted with all that had passed. "Look to yourself," he said, to the beggar, "for they are in pursuit. In fact they have spied you out, but they will not come here again."

They had indeed caught a glimpse of him as he entered the ruins; they followed, but their reception was such that, half dead with fright, they had no inclination to proceed. For his pursuers, the moment they reached the awful precincts of the Castle, beheld a solemn funeral procession, that rose like an exhalation from the ground, advancing before them, until, seized with an agony of fear, they turned back, reached the city with some difficulty, took to their beds and died.

This shocking occurrence, to which the voice of the people added fresh terrors, placed the beggarman in perfect security. He lived unmolested in his hut, drank his wine, forgot that he was a poor mendicant, and by comparing old and new dates thought himself a very lucky fellow.

One day there joined his company just such another miserably clad wretch as he had once been. He had been equally roughly handled in the world, had nowhere to lay his head, and his good brother, uncorrupted by his late prosperity, humanely offered him a share of his own roof. In fact he took him into partnership; they beat up the neigh-

bouring districts in different directions, made common stock of their net proceeds, and their firm continued for a considerable time. Nothing, however, was said to the new partner respecting the wine.

But one evening, returning home earlier than usual with a well-filled scrip, he heard as he came nearer loud sounds of revelry and mirth; he thought a whole party must be assembled somewhere in the vicinity. One voice, at least, was in full key. He found the door and windows open, as he drew nigh; and all this loud jubilee came from within, as if intended to be heard through the country far and wide. He entered, and found no one besides his old friend; all the sounds of revelry were his; his countenance was lighted up with joy, his eyes sparkled, he sang, and two flasks stood between his knees, one empty, and the other full of wine. "Welcome, old boy!" he cried, as his friend came in; "sit you down here!—drink, and sing a song for once in your life! —I am richer, man, than all the Red Cross Knights in Germany that ever flourished!" In silent astonishment the old man seated himself, drank as he was bidden, and soon began to sing. The other flask was speedily emptied; and after this good drinking bout, both fell asleep. The new partner dreamed only of the oddity of finding so rich a beverage in so poor a place; and the first question he asked himself when he awaked was, Where the deuce does he get it from? His friend being still asleep, he searched his pockets, and examined every article in the house, to get, if possible, into the secret. All in vain! yet the next day, the next, and the next, the flask was always full; he looked, he inquired from his friend, but could get no satisfactory answer, more than, "The butler has forbidden me to say a word about it; he gave it me.'

But the curious old fellow was dying to know the secret, and determined to keep a sharp look out. With this view he had recourse to an old stratagem; just as they were going to take a glass, he suddenly fell down in a fit, began to kick

and make mouths; till, getting under the table, he gave it such a hearty jog as quite upset the whole drinking apparatus, and every drop of wine was lost. During the continuance of his fit he took good heed of everything his friend did; who, thinking it a good opportunity to obtain a new supply before the old man recovered, took a key out of his pocket and went. He was no sooner gone, than up sprang his friend, and glided softly after him. It was already dusk, and he had some difficulty to keep him in sight, till, with the help of the moon, he saw him enter the old Castle, and actually disappear down one of the vaults. He had now like to have fallen into a real fit; the ruins gleamed awfully upon his sight. Yet he had reached the entrance, his foot was upon the first step; he went on through the overhanging shrubs, and he saw his partner, not far off, unlock a small door. He saw a light glimmering at a distance, and when the door opened, it became still more visible; but he had scarcely gone a few steps further towards the door when it slammed to, with a hideous noise, and not without catching the old inquisitive beggar a pretty sharp hit on the elbow. At this he made a sad outcry, which echoed along the inner vaults; a figure was seen going up the steps, and the old man, in an agony of fear, leaving the skirt of his coat fast in the doorway, ran off quicker than he ever ran in his life; and only looking once round to see whether he was pursued, he at length reached the hut, more dead than alive. Resuming a little courage with the return of light, and anxious for his friend's safety, the old beggar determined to visit the ruins, being now broad day, in search of him. He found the way, and came to the bushes which he had passed the evening before; but he could nowhere discover the little door: the whole scene appeared to have been changed. Thinking he must have missed the way, he wandered up and down the ruins; yet all his researches proved vain. Perceiving it was now near sunset, he began to be alarmed, and set off home at full speed, the speed of an old beggarman. He now

came to the resolution of venturing no more near the fatal spot, but continued to beg honestly in the neighbourhood. A year had elapsed, and it was the eve of St. Martin's day. Once more, as formerly, seated upon the same spot where he had last been regaled by his lost partner, a victim to his fatal expedition, sat the old beggarman. Twilight was already coming on, when lo! the door opened, and in walked a figure of which he had some faint recollection; he fixed his eyes upon him for a moment, and ran towards him; it was his old friend. "What, is it possible?" cried he. "Is it indeed, you?" "It is, sir, sure enough," replied the other; "the same who took you into partnership and gave you shelter here. And yet you were so very ungrateful and unreasonable as to upset all my wine in return. A plague upon your fits; and thus compelled me to get into a horrid scrape, by disobeying the butler's commands."

The strange beggar then related all he had seen—how he had spent a whole year with the spirits of the underworld, been initiated in all their secrets, and condemned to learn the most hard and frightful lessons of their power. At length, to his great relief, he was informed that the day of his release was at hand; that he must instantly depart, and acquaint the upper world with the secrets he had seen.

THEODOR KÖRNER

(1791–1813)

I

THE HARP

A STORY OF THE SPIRIT WORLD

(Translated by DORA FOOTMAN)

THE young couple were living in the heyday of their honeymoon, love their only bond, regardless of what the future had in store for them.

They had known each other from childhood, but Sellner's position had forced him to postpone the fulfilment of his heart's desire.

At last his patent was granted and on the following Sunday they entered into possession of their new home. The trying period of family gatherings and congratulations was over, they were alone at last.

They spent many happy hours, Sellner with his flute, and Josephine with her harp. Everything betokened a happy future.

One evening, having enjoyed their music, Josephine complained of a headache. She had felt it coming on all day without saying anything to her husband, not wishing to worry him. The excitement of a musical evening had made her feverish, and she had always suffered from nerves. She could no longer hide it from her husband, who hurriedly

sent for the doctor. The latter treated the matter lightly, assuring them she would be better in the morning.

After a restless night, during which she was constantly delirious, the doctor discussed undoubted signs of a severe nervous breakdown, and in spite of his care, she grew daily worse. Sellner was sick with anxiety. On the ninth day Josephine herself began to realise that she could not last much longer, and the doctor had already prepared Sellner for the worst. She felt that her hours were numbered and resigned herself peacefully for the end.

"Dear Eduard," she said to her husband, taking him in her arms for the last time, "it grieves me deeply to leave this beautiful world, in which we have been so happy, and although I may not be allowed to lie in your arms Josephine's love shall hover over you like a protecting angel, till we meet again in the next world."

With these words she fell back and peacefully passed away. It was nine o'clock in the evening.

Sellner was inconsolable, the shock completely undermined his health, and when, after many weeks of suffering, he began to recover, he had lost the vigour of youth and sank into a state of depression, living only in the painful memory of the past.

Josephine's room had not been touched since her death, her needlework still lay on the table, her harp in the corner.

In the evenings he went to this room sanctified by their former love, and taking his flute, would stand by the window lost in his dreams.

One beautiful moonlight night he had heard the watchman from the neighbouring castle tower call the hour of nine. At the same moment the strings of Josephine's harp spoke as though touched by unseen hands. Completely overcome, he ceased to play his flute, and the harp was again silent. Then he played Josephine's favourite melody, and realised with amazement that the harp was playing his accompaniment! A joyous thrill went through him and he

sank to the floor as he held out his arms to his beloved shadow. At the same moment a warm breath of wind and a bright light passed over him. In his ecstasy he exclaimed, "You are the blessed shadow of my Josephine, you promised to hover over me with your love, and you have kept your word. I can feel your breath and kisses on my lips, and I am thrilled by your presence."

Once more he seized his flute and heard the notes of the harp, softer and softer till they faded right away.

Sellner's whole nervous system was upset by the experiences of the evening. He slept badly, and in his feverish dreams the harp seemed always to be calling him. He awoke late from his nightly fantasies with a feeling that his whole being was influenced by the victory of the soul over the body.

He longed for the evening when he could go into Josephine's room, where by playing his flute he would find himself in his dream state. As nine o'clock came, and hardly had the last stroke sounded, when he would hear the harp, swelling into a glad volume of sound. When his flute was silent the spirit music ceased. And as the pale shimmering light passed over him, he could only murmur "Josephine! Josephine! take me in your arms." And the sounds of the harp would die away softly and gradually. Even more impressed than the first time, Sellner returned to his own room.

His faithful servant was so shocked at his appearance that, against his orders, he sent for the doctor, who was also a great friend of Sellner's. He found him with a high fever with the same symptoms as Josephine had had, only far worse. His temperature increased during the night, and he continually raved about Josephine and the harp.

In the morning he grew quieter. The struggle was over and he felt his approaching release quite clearly, although the doctor refused to agree. The invalid related the events of the previous evenings to his friend, and no argument on the

part of this cold and practical man could dissuade him from his own ideas.

Towards evening he grew much weaker and in a trembling voice asked to be taken into Josephine's room, and this was done.

He gazed about him with calm serenity, dwelling on each happy memory, speechless, and in silent tears, and convinced that he would die at nine o'clock. The fatal moment drew near. Having said his farewells, he sent every one away, with the exception of the doctor, who insisted on remaining. Once more the ninth hour struck solemnly from the Castle tower. Sellner's expression changed, his pale face brightened. "Josephine, greet me again before I leave so that I know that you are near me, and help me to vanquish fear with your love." At the same moment the strings of the harp sounded, playing beautiful chords, and a bright light shone over the dying man. "I come! I come!" he cried, and he sank back fighting death. Softer and softer grew the tones of the harp. Sellner made a last effort, and as he collapsed the strings of the harp broke, as if rent by some ghostly hand.

The doctor, trembling with emotion, closed the eyes of the deceased, who lay as though asleep, and, deeply moved, quietly left the house. So affected was the doctor by the last hour at his friend's deathbed that it was some time before he could bring himself to relate the incident to a circle of intimate friends, to whom he showed the harp which he had kept as a remembrance.

THEODOR KÖRNER

(1791–1813)

✣

II

THE JOURNEY TO SCHANDAU

A STORY IN LETTERS

(Translated by JOAN CLEMENT SCOTT)

Lichtenfels to Willmar

Schandau, June 1, 1820

DEAR Friend: I promised to send news of myself very soon. It is only twenty-four hours since I left you and I am already fulfilling that promise. You must admit that this is prompt. As a bridegroom of the near future it is necessary that I should acquire this sterling quality, therefore I will not boast of it now.

In the whole world I am sure there is no greater contrast than the freedom of pleasure-loving student life as opposed to legalised marriage. Several of these SALTO MORTALE have ended in breaking their necks; but I hope I shall be happy. "Nothing venture, nothing have."

You wonder, you have so often told me, at my frivolous attitude on such a serious matter, which, as you say, will decide my future happiness. I do not see how it could be otherwise. You know that my family insist on my marrying the young Gräfin Stellwitz unless I come into a large fortune, which in the circumstances seems unlikely. Our respective fathers have already arranged it, and a short while

ago my father paid all my youthful debts, which amounted to a thousand thälers, without a single reproach. I will willingly give him that pleasure again. Anyway, it appears that my future bride is an angel. In my father's words she is "modest, pious, well-mannered, amiable, and MOTE BEME, *rich*."

In short, if I can believe all he writes, there awaits me a life of celestial happiness. You probably realise that I do not imagine this "celestial happiness" to be true. I shall simply await events. Up till now I have never looked upon love as anything more than a momentary excitement. When people speak of "everlasting love," and the joys and comforts of home life, etc., etc., I considered it merely a pleasant dream. I have never yet suffered from heartache, and I am sure the proverbial fascination of women has no attraction for me. I prefer my own quiet and easy way of living.

I will now tell you of my journey here. You know my father had the romantic idea that I should meet my bride for the first time in Schandau. He thought it would be more enchanting if we met in this wonderful scenery and that the grandeur of Nature's influence would enhance the affair.

As she is arriving in three days' time, I am determined to make the most of my freedom before yielding to the yoke of marriage. Here, where I have spent so many happy hours, I will revive my memories of the past and then endeavour to stimulate an atmosphere which will be pleasing to my pious wife. I must confess I am very anxious to know what she looks like. I was never allowed to write to her, because my father thinks it a merry jest, our meeting as strangers, so I really know nothing about her, not even her Christian name! It is absurd of him, but he is so convinced that we shall adore each other that any contrary ideas never enter his head. I only hope to God his well-laid plans for my happiness will not end in disaster!

You begged me to give a description of my journey and my present surroundings. Dear friend, please spare me. To begin with, I am not as calm as I should be, and the prospect of meeting my bride terrifies me. Secondly, a description of places to some one who has never visited them is always dull. Up till now neither you nor your beloved Mary have had the courage to venture beyond the walls of your own home town So what use is it my telling you of the two towers named after the giants Lilian and Konigstein, and how they stand on guard at the entrance of this sublime sanctuary and appear to threaten all who dare intrude, towering against the pillars of Hercules?

Have you any idea of the splendour of this panorama? Impossible, so come quickly and see for yourself.

The wonders I am trying to describe would appeal to anyone who had been here and could picture to himself the meaning of the written word, thereby living again the joys of his former journey; but to others they would be empty phrases. I think it is more satisfactory, when one speaks about such natural wonders and splendours, it should be done with all the delicacy and feeling we are capable of; then it will please every one. It is much easier for me to put myself in the place of some one faced with a beautiful landscape whose description of which would never be equivalent to the reality. Once again, in spite of myself, I fall into reflection. It is getting late and my tired eyelids remind me that I have walked many miles to-day. Kindest regards to your dear, sweet little wife. Write to me soon.

Isadora to Josephine Tetschen

July 1st

Every one is asleep, dear Josephine, only your Isadora is awake and hastens to send the promised news of her journey. I am talking to you in spirit, we are sitting in our beloved cell, you in the big bow window and I by the fire. The candle has burnt low, and the moon shines through

the painted window-panes. I fancy I can hear the rustle of the lime trees outside the window. All is still and silent as in my beloved convent, which I left so unwillingly in order to face the World. And oh! what circumstances I have to face. I don't know how, after being brought up in the simplicity and humbleness of convent life, I can bear to think of the future.

When we sat together and talked about the days to come, we pictured to ourselves a happy and domestic life, and I grew accustomed to the idea of marrying my cousin. We attributed every virtue to my unknown betrothed, he was the subject of all our dreams, and now the day approaches when all my hopes should be realised. I feel he cannot resemble my dreams. Shall I be unhappy if he does not come up to them? My father has said such nice things about him to me, but is it only to calm my fears? Perhaps he thinks that, being unused to men's society, any man I meet is bound to make a great impression on me. He is mistaken. In the quiet of the convent we boldly discussed our ideals. No man could attain them, so all my worldly dreams are shattered. In any case I shall have fulfilled my father's wish.

All day long I have endeavoured not to show him my feelings; it would only upset him, and that would break my heart. How glad I am that I have a few more days to wander about this beautiful place, before the arrival of my betrothed!

Perhaps during that time I may regain the calm I had when I left my beloved convent.

Poor Isadora, the knowledge of having fulfilled your duty when young is small comfort.

I am too weak and unsophisticated to face this ordeal. The convent is the only place where I can be happy.

We left Toplitz this morning; at Father's suggestion we took scarcely anything with us, in order to enjoy the simple life without unnecessary encumbrances. We went to "Auszig," and I was much impressed with the view of the

Elbe. We crossed the latter and climbed up the Schreckenstein, an old ruin situated in steep rocks overlooking the valley.

You have no idea how wonderful it was to sit in the great Hall of the former Knights. Far below me surged the water, and my gaze followed the river wending its way, so majestically, over steep boulders.

I felt sad, though formerly a view such as this made me childishly happy.

Oh, Josephine! your Isadora is much changed—we joined our boat and the waves rocked us gently down the river.

Very soon the Schreckenstein with its beautiful towers disappeared. The valley shrank into the distance, and no sign of a village was to be seen on the banks. Soon the river narrowed and we appeared to be surrounded by fields. At every stage the scenery changed. We halted for lunch on the Sondel. The novelty of it all and the excitement of a long journey by water restored me to a happier frame of mind. Later the Towers of Tetschner Castle came into view. As we drew nearer it stood in all its beauty before us. Built on the top of a rock, it dominates the whole town.

As our ship turned, this mighty scene lay before us in all its grandeur. On leaving the boat we proceeded to climb up to the Castle, from which we had a view of the whole countryside.

What struck me most was the sight of the Rosenberg. Its appearance and colouring were so unusual that it was with difficulty that I tore myself away. The Castle gardens are pretty and artistically laid out. What interested me more was a pavilion overlooking the Elbe. There was plenty of life on the banks of the river, with several ships lying at anchor. For some time we sat under the pleasant roof of the pavilion, until at last my aunt, feeling the coolness of the evening, compelled us to return. Our hotel was terribly dirty. With difficulty I concealed my disgust from

my father, who was doing his best to make things comfortable for us.

How different it would have been in our own delightful cell! I have thought at least a thousand times to-day of my peaceful convent and my darling Josephine.

And now good-night, otherwise my Aunt will say I am ruining my eyes by writing so late. A thousand kisses for my dear Josephine, and I will write again to-morrow.

Lichtenfels to Willmar

July 2nd.

My good Willmar, you will always envy me the happy days I am spending in this romantic neighbourhood. It has been a delightful adventure. All too wonderful, and I am seeing everything with a new interest. It has deeply affected me.

Let me relate what has happened to me in these romantic surroundings. The hotel in the market-place in which I have taken up my residence is very comfortable, and for that reason I wake up very late. I was, therefore, compelled to give up my plan of going to Winterberg and Prebisch Thor by the Kuhstall, so I went from here direct to Winterberg, and afterwards on to Prebisch Thor. I had ample time for this trip. So I called in at a very decent inn, about a quarter of an hour's walk from the town, in the very pretty valley of Kirnitzchthal. I refreshed myself in a neighbouring brook, and regaled myself with two or three delicious cups of coffee. Thus fortified I continued my way along the banks of the Elbe to Schmilke, and climbed up the Winterberg.

I will not speak of its beauty. The view was not as beautiful as I expected, though more picturesque than many other higher mountains. Throwing myself down in the shade of the beeches, I was completely lost in surroundings. I had remained in this position for some time, when I heard the sound of voices in the distance, and could distinguish

figures approaching me. I was annoyed at being disturbed, so I got up and proceeded to walk in the direction of Prebisch Thor. I then found myself in the presence of a father, mother and daughter. In the beautiful face of the daughter there was something saint-like, indicating a nobility of breeding and contrasting strangely with the simplicity of her attire. I was at first surprised, and greeted them politely. You should have seen the graceful manner in which she thanked me. Against my will I was compelled to remain standing and staring after them, till they were completely hidden by the trees. The girl turned round twice, and I was almost forced to follow her, if only to touch the hem of her dress.

I can hear you laughing at me, and you are perfectly right. I frankly confess that never have a maiden's eyes so strangely impressed me. At last, as though in a dream, I approached the Prebisch Thor, where under a tree by the gate I found a pocket handkerchief with the name of Isadora. It was so fine and dainty that it might have been woven by a fairy, and it had a delightful perfume. It was certainly hers. I picked it up tenderly and could not help repeating over and over again her pretty name.

There is a wonderful charm in a pretty-sounding name: a girl called Ursel, Rachel, Rebecca or Charity conveys nothing whatever to me, although they might possess all the charm in the world. Isadora! Isadora! How much melody is expressed in this beautiful name, conjuring up as it does a delightful picture by its very sound! What I thought of the Prebisch Thor and the impression made upon me by the towering rocks I cannot tell you. I was too much occupied with my encounter, and in vain did the guide point out to me the different mountain peaks of the surrounding country. I climbed the steep mountain overlooking the wonderfully picturesque valley, still thinking of my unknown heroine. I reached the nearest Bohemian resort on the Elbe, on the way to Hirnitzschkretscham, where my

guide had procured a small boat, in which we proceeded to Schandau. The gentle rocking of that little boat brought me back to my senses, and I was able to enjoy the delightful scenery of the Elbe valley, and the rocks shining like copper in the setting sun.

As we passed by Schilmke, the first Saxon village, I again saw my friends on the point of entering another boat.

Pretending not to notice them, I allowed them to pass, and when they had gone by I slowly followed in my little boat, remaining behind them at a respectful distance. Darkness was falling in the valley, and the moon helped further to the romance of the situation. Like a small cloud they crept on over the water before me. From time to time I could hear the whisper of her melodious voice. I heard them calling her Isadora, and a feeling such as I never experienced came over me. It was not what one might call sentimentality, over which we have often laughed together. It was almost adoration for beauty and nobility. The expression of my ideal called forth by the charm of my surroundings.

Like ghosts of the past stood the rocks in the full light of the moon, throwing their shadows over the darkening valleys. Nothing disturbed the stillness of the night, excepting the stroke of the oars and the murmurings of the stream. Suddenly I heard Isadora's voice coming across the waters, singing softly, with all the expression, which lent itself to the solemnity of the moment. She was singing a simple song with a sweet heavenly voice, which penetrated into my very soul. With the last verses her voice seemed so sad and troubled that it came across the water like a tormented spirit.

Oh! if only I could have looked into her eyes glowing with spiritual emotion!

We arrived only too soon in Schandau, and you can imagine my joy when I found she was staying at the same hotel.

She occupied a room quite close to mine; I could listen to Isadora's voice undisturbed. How interestingly was she able to describe the various places she visited that day, and how deeply the picturesque surroundings had affected her! I learnt that on the following day an excursion to the "Kuhstall" had been proposed by her father, in which he would be accompanied by the ladies of the party.

I immediately requested the landlord to procure a guide for me, so that I might again experience the joy of being with them.

At last there was silence in their room, so I sat me down to write this long letter to you.

Willmar, do not blame me for this, as I know you may. I have already blamed myself a thousand times, although I have never seen my own betrothed. I realise thoroughly what an extraordinary change has come over me. I feel that my character is being ennobled; but I also feel that it cannot be a momentary passion—that the heart should so quickly overcome the mind would have up to now, seemed impossible, but that one glance from a maiden should have so disturbed my previous peace of mind would seem almost incredible.

But I have been recklessly playing with fire. Willmar, I am only a child; you have so often told me that I was too frivolous. Bear with me for the moment, and I shall be happier and more content.

Isadora to Josephine

A few words, my darling Josephine, before the day closes. I am very tired, we have done so much, and I can hardly keep my eyes open. I could have told you such beautiful stories of to-day's outings. You have no idea what an effect the view from Winterberg to Bohemia had upon me. I was standing on foreign soil far away from you, and my childhood's beautiful world.

At the top of the mountain we met a young man of singularly attractive appearance. He greeted us with great respect, and continued to gaze after us when we had left him. He followed us along the Elbe. I felt quite excited when my father asked me to sing. The very idea that this stranger could hear me naturally made me feel very nervous, but in the end I was moved to do so by the harmony of my picturesque surroundings. Enough for to-day, more to-morrow. The stranger's room is next to ours.

Lichtenfels to Willmar

Willmar! Willmar! The dawn of new life is breaking. The great and holy awakening of a noble love. To-day my heart is melting. Beneath the cold pitiless sophistry of the world there can always be heard another voice appealing to the higher emotions of the heart.

I am at a loss to understand how I have existed up to now without appreciating all that is sacred in life.

If I have submitted so far to my father's will and outside influences, I now feel equal to fend for myself, in order to secure my future freedom and happiness.

The more I feel that my father wants to make me happy, and has only acted for my own sake, the more I feel that I must decide for myself. He would be very upset if he realised that I might oppose his wish for my life's happiness. I have made up my mind, I cannot and will not marry my betrothed, for I don't want to be unfaithful to her, whatever Isadora's decision about me may be. My heart belongs to her and always will. To the former I could only come empty-handed, thereby spoiling both her future and my own. What a martyrdom for me if she should be worthy of sincere love, that I should sacrifice her to a loveless marriage. No! no! If I cannot be happy, at least I can be just, and still hold to the belief that I was not altogether unworthy of happiness.

All these sudden changes in my being, which are to influence the happiness or unhappiness of my life, have only just made themselves manifest, and that I am sure of my own mind and my heart will never change.

I had been up here in the "Kuhstall" an hour, had wandered about in all directions, and had fallen into the romantic mood with which the place inspires me, when I heard Isadora and her party approaching.

Her image had invaded my dreams all night, and the thought of seeing her so soon in her beauty filled me with a certain shyness and embarrassment, which I could not explain. She had soon ascended the narrow path leading to the higher peaks. You should have heard her melodious voice as she exclaimed aloud on seeing the lovely scene before her! It seemed to me like the sweet tones of a harp, and it filled me with delight to listen to the dear girl unobserved.

Then I heard her at the entrance of the narrow gorge asking her father to come up, so as to have a better view of the valley below. My heart began to beat faster as I saw her slim white form climbing round the head of the rock. I slipped behind a bush and awaited her arrival. She came up alone, the others could not face the narrowness of the path, and with a look of sweet innocence and joy she stood admiring the wonders of Nature. For a few moments she stood wrapped in silent contemplation of the landscape. I joined her, but in my embarrassment could not think of any but the most commonplace remarks. My voice startled her, and she blushed when she saw me, but she soon recovered herself and spoke of the wonderful surroundings with such charm and lack of affectation that I was soon at my ease, as though I had known her for years and was almost related to her. At last her parents called to her, and I accompanied her down. Her father treated me as a casual acquaintance, and we discussed our meeting, but I cannot write to you about all this. They were wonderful

hours, the memory of which is so sacred to me, but it means nothing on paper. In any case I returned with them, dined and so was able to see and admire Isadora to my heart's content. What a wonderful girl, what an angel! And yet I do not know who they are; as they did not ask me for my name I did not think it was polite to ask for theirs, but I discovered that they were also going to Dresden, remaining there, as far as I gather, for some time.

Isadora, sweet, heavenly creature—something tells me that we have found each other for ever. With her soulful eyes looking so sadly into mine, I could have thrown myself at her feet. Isadora! Isadora!

Isadora to Josephine

My dear good Josephine, I might have known that when I parted from you in our quiet convent I should lose my peace of mind. Believe me, dear sister, your Isadora is going to be very very unhappy, and now I have no one to confide in. Much as I love my father and aunt, I cannot tell them everything, as I can you. If only you were here to advise me. Listen, dear. Upon the "Kuhstall," where we went to-day, a narrow gorge leads through the rocks to the summit, from whence you get a wonderful view of the valley. Father and my aunt did not dare risk the narrow path, so I went alone. Whilst I was inwardly admiring the grandeur of the scene the stranger we met yesterday suddenly addressed me, and seemed delighted at our second chance meeting. I blushed, for his face had haunted me all night, and at first I was so embarrassed that I was unable to answer. But we were very soon at our ease. He spoke so beautifully and with such feeling; I have never heard any one speak like it before. He expressed what I have so often thought myself, but much more clearly. My father called us down at last. He appeared to please both my father and my aunt. Father invited him to return with us, and very soon

he seemed like an old friend. He looks so handsome—tall with dark eyes—and having seen this man, the thought of marrying my cousin fills me with despair. No! I must not see this handsome stranger again, otherwise I shall not have the courage to give my heart according to my father's wishes. If only I was safely in your arms behind the sanctuary of the convent walls! I wanted to dwell on the memory of those days, and I wanted to find peace even if I could not find happiness. Poor Isadora!

Lichtenfels to Willmar

Dear old Friend, if only I could shake you by the hand. I am so overjoyed, I don't know what to do with myself. I do not deserve so much luck and happiness. Before reading any further, embrace your dear wife and think of your happiest hours together, and then listen to what your dear Hermann has to tell you. Firmly convinced that to-day my fate would be decided, and feeling very nervous, I went over to fetch Isadora for a walk, as I had promised.

A sleepless night, during which I had thought of nothing else but her, had made me decide to leave, and I was quite prepared to do so. I was free till twelve o'clock, when I was expecting my father and my poor cousin, whom I would have deprived of her bridegroom. I wanted to make the best of the next hour. We had breakfast at the hotel under the awning, and still I had been unable to find an opportunity to propose to Isadora. At last I suggested a little walk in the direction of Karlsruhe, about a quarter of a mile away, with a lovely view over the Elbe valley. Isadora took my arm and the others followed. On the way the latter were delayed by a stranger; they remained talking together, whilst we continued on our way.

It was evident from the expression in Isadora's eyes that she was aware of what was passing through my mind.

Then at last we stopped, and, trembling, I began: "The

delightful moments with you are rapidly drawing to a close. If ever you should recall this lovely country, think always of me." "And you will always think of me," answered she quickly. "I shall never forget these days." Blushingly she lowered her eyes. I threw myself at her feet and made my declaration. I saw tears in her eyes, she wanted to go, but I held her back. "Let me know at once," I cried passionately, "my future hangs on this moment." With trembling lips, tearfully, she answered, "my father has already decided my future, I dare not listen to you any longer." I turned cold, realising that a terrible blow had fallen on me. Recovering myself, I replied, "You have blasted my future happiness, but as a memory of the past I beg of you to leave with me some slight token." Shaking with emotion, she handed me her handkerchief, marked with her name. We were both moved to tears.

Silenced by our emotions we were suddenly aroused by my father's voice: "Hallo, children! You seem to be getting on very well together," cried he. Embarrassed, we drew apart. "Well," said my father, "there is no reason why you should not kiss her hand. Let me embrace you, children; old Lichtenfels has arranged things nicely for you." I threw my arms around my father's neck, and fell at Isadora's feet. "Cousin Hermann," cried she, and fell into my arms.

So at last we have found each other, and I am the happiest man in the world. Isadora belongs to me and I know that she loves me.

Willmar, come as quickly as possible, bringing Mary with you. You must assist in the celebration of our engagement.

Share your own happiness with us, and give your blessing to your old friend Hermann, in this, the happiest moment of his life. Come quickly and give us your blessing. Isadora joins me in this invitation.

THEODOR KÖRNER

(1791–1813)

***

III

THE ROCKS OF HANS HEILING

(A BOHEMIAN LEGEND)

(Translated by DORA FOOTMAN)

MANY, many years ago there lived a rich peasant in a little village on the River Eger. History does not tell us the name of the village, but it is assumed to have been well known to the visitors of Karlsbad. Opposite to it was the village of Aich, on the left bank of the river. The peasant, whose name was Veit, had a charming little daughter, who was the life and joy of the whole place.

Elizabeth was really very pretty and well brought up, which was quite unusual in those days. Next to Veit's house there stood a little hut, belonging to young Arnold, whose father had just died. Arnold had been learning the building trade, and after a long absence from home returned to find his father dying.

Like a devoted son he shed many bitter tears over the old man's grave. He had left him this little hut, his only other inheritance being a sense of honour and truth, with a desire for all things good and beautiful.

His father was seriously ill when the boy returned to the village, and the joy of his return completely upset the old man. Arnold looked after him and never left his bedside. And so it happened that it was not until after his

father's death that he was able to see any of the friends and acquaintances of his early youth.

First and foremost amongst these was Veit's daughter Elizabeth, for they had grown up together, and he could never forget this childhood friendship of a little girl who had shed bitter tears when he left for his apprenticeship in Prague.

Arnold had grown up to a tall and good-looking young man, and had pictured to himself Elizabeth grown into a beautiful girl.

On the third evening after the death of his father, as Arnold was sitting sorrowfully by the newly-made grave, he heard a step coming softly towards him in the churchyard. Turning round, he saw advancing from behind a mound of grass a pretty girl with a basket of flowers on her arm. Hidden, as he was behind a bush, he was not at first seen by Elizabeth, for she it was, who was coming to strew flowers over her neighbour's grave. With tears in her eyes, and with folded hands, she whispered, "Rest in peace, dear neighbour; may death be easier to you than life. Your grave shall never lack flowers as long as I am here to bring them." At that moment Arnold appeared from behind the bush. "Elizabeth," cried he, and took the frightened girl in his arms, "Elizabeth, do you know me?"—"Oh, Arnold," blushingly murmured she, "it is years since we have seen each other."—"And how pretty and charming you have grown!" said Arnold. "And you loved my father and looked after him during his illness."—"But, Arnold, I was fond of your father," said she, releasing herself from his embrace. "We have often talked of you."—"Did he really think so much of me?" said Arnold. "Oh, I thank God that I have remained a true and loyal son to him! But think, Elizabeth, how everything has changed; when we were children together, with my father sitting at the door, we used to play around his knees; you were so sweet to me then, and we were always together."—"And

now, the dear old father is sleeping beneath us, and we are grown up."—"During the whole time of our separation I always thought of you."—"And I of you," whispered Elizabeth, looking lovingly at him with her large friendly eyes. "Listen," said Arnold; "we loved each other from the first. I had to travel, but now, finding you at my father's grave, both of us still united in sympathy, it seems to me as though we had never really parted. My child-love has grown into a man's passion. Elizabeth, I love you; here in this consecrated ground I tell you for the first time that I love you. And you?" But Elizabeth hid her blushes on his manly shoulder, and softly wept. "And you?" asked Arnold for the second time, in a low, pleading voice. Lifting up her head, with tears in her eyes, "Arnold, I love you; I have always, always loved you," she replied. Drawing her to his heart, he sealed the contract of their happiness with kisses.

After the first excitement of their newly-awakened love, they remained long in silent sympathy by the father's grave. Arnold then told her of his travels, and how he had always longed to return. Elizabeth again spoke of his father and of the happy days of their childhood. The sun had long since gone under, but they had not noticed it; they were at last awakened from their dreams by some passing footsteps in a neighbouring street, and Elizabeth, after a hurried farewell kiss, fled from his arms.

Arnold remained until late in the night by his father's grave, sunk in sacred memories, and it was grey dawn before he returned to his father's hut with a reviving spirit.

The following morning, when Elizabeth brought her father's breakfast, old Veit began to talk of Arnold. "I am sorry for the poor lad," said he with feeling. "You will remember him, Elizabeth; you always used to play together."—"Why shouldn't I remember?" whispered Elizabeth, blushing. "I thought you had grown too proud to remember the poor fellow. It is true we have grown

rich, and Arnold has remained poor, but they were always good people—the father at any rate; and of the son I hear much that is praiseworthy."—"Of course, Father," interrupted Elizabeth. "Young Arnold is very charming."—"But, Elizabeth; how do you know?"—"They were talking about it in the village."—"Well, I shall only be too pleased to help him; he can depend on me."

Elizabeth, who had remained silent, invented some pretext for going to the kitchen, and left the old man alone.

As arranged, Arnold met his sweetheart in the garden of Veit's house. She told him all that had taken place, and he was more than hopeful about the future.

"Yes," said he at last, "I have been thinking all night long, and I have come to the conclusion that I had better go and see your father to-day, and confess that we love each other, and that we want to marry. I'll tell him what I can do, show the references from my employers and ask him for his blessing. He will be pleased with my frankness. He will give his consent, and I shall go forth again with renewed courage, make a little money, return content, and once again we shall be happy. Do you agree, dearest?"—"Yes," the delighted girl assured him, throwing her arms round his neck. "Father will certainly give his consent, he is so fond of me." And full of renewed hope, they parted.

In the evening Arnold dressed in his best clothes, went once again to his father's grave, praying inwardly for his blessing, and then made his way to Veit's house. Elizabeth was waiting for him, trembling with joy, received him and took him in to her father. "Well, young Arnold," said the old man, "what do you bring me?"—"Myself," answered Arnold. "That means?" said Veit. "Sir," began Arnold, whose voice at first was shaking with emotion, but gaining courage as he proceeded, "sir, let me first explain myself, you will then better understand what I have to say. I am poor, but I have learnt something, as my references prove to you. The whole world is open to me, for I do

not propose to stand alone by my trade. I want to study Art and become a celebrated architect, as I had so often promised my father. But, sir, in this world work must have an objective and a purpose, as I do not build houses for the sake of building, but for the use to which they may be put, so it shall be with my Art. I shall be working with but one object in view—to renew my present request, with the hopes of it being granted. Promise me this: if I succeed through making every effort in my work that you will reward me." "And what then?" said Veit, "what shall be your reward?"—"Your daughter, sir; we love each other. As an honourable man I approached you direct, without, as many others might have done, having previously extracted a promise from your daughter. No! I came to you in the good old-fashioned way, and asked your permission to return after three years and claim your daughter as my wife."—"My boy," answered the old man, "I have heard all you have to say; now let me tell you my decision. I am glad that you love my daughter, for you are an honest man; I am glad that you have first of all approached me, and for this step I commend you. Your employers speak of you as being well versed in your Art, and look with great hope to your future. Good luck to you, but I cannot promise you my daughter on hopes alone. During the three years some other might come, whom she might prefer—or, failing that, whom I myself might prefer; am I to throw away these opportunities whilst awaiting your return? No, young man, that is not right; but if you should return having made your fortune, and if Elizabeth is still free, I will not stand in your way—and now we will drop the subject."

"But think, sir," said Arnold. "I have nothing more to say," answered Veit. "God bless you. If you like to stay on as my guest you are entirely welcome, but nothing more about Elizabeth."—"And is that your last word?" said Arnold. "My last," coldly replied the old man.

"Then God help me!" cried Arnold, and made for the door. Veit held him back by the arm. "Young man, do not make a fool of yourself; if you are a man of courage, pull yourself together, and do not give way. The world is large, go back to your work, and courage will come to you. Farewell, and good luck in the task you have before you." With that he released him, and Arnold hurriedly left the house.

Tearfully he tied up his bundle, and bidding farewell to his home, he crossed over to the churchyard, to take leave of his father's grave. Elizabeth, who had heard the conversation through the door, had burst into tears, all her dreams had been shattered, and every hope seemed lost.

She longed to see her Arnold once more, so, leaning out of the window, she waited for him as he came out of his house, on his way to the churchyard, and quickly following him, she found him praying on his father's grave.

"Arnold! Arnold! you are leaving us," cried she, embracing him. "Oh, I cannot let you go!" Arnold stood up as though awakening from a dream. "Elizabeth, I must, I must; do not break my heart with your tears, for I must go."—"And when are you coming back again?"—"Elizabeth, I must work, as all men must. I will not lose a moment, and in three years I will be back again. Will you be true to me?"—"Unto death," she replied, sobbing. "And if your father forces you?"—"Then they will have to drag me to the church. And before the very altar I will say 'no.' Yes, Arnold, we will remain true to each other, wherever we may happen to be. Somewhere or other we shall meet again."—"So, let us part," cried Arnold, seeing a ray of hope in her tears. "Again let us part. I fear no obstacle, no task shall be too heavy for me. With this kiss I bind myself to you forever . . . and now good-bye. In three years we shall be happy." He tore himself away from her arms. "Arnold! Arnold!" she cried, "do not leave me!" But he was gone. From

afar he continued to wave his white handkerchief, until lost to view in the woods.

Elizabeth knelt down on the grass and prayed fervently to God. Convinced of Arnold's faithfulness, she was calmer and more composed in her father's presence—for he watched her carefully and scrutinised her every action.

Every morning early she wandered to the place where Arnold had last embraced her. Old Veit noticed this, but said nothing. He was content to see Elizabeth so quiet and happy as he thought.

And so a year went by, and to Elizabeth's joy no new young man appeared whom her father might prefer.

At the end of the second year there returned to the village a man who had been forced to leave it, owing to his disorderly conduct.

Hans Heiling had left a poor man, but returned in the best of circumstances. He seemed to have turned up in the village just to show his former enemies what a rich man he was. It appeared at first as though he would only be there for a short time, for he spoke of important business, but it soon became evident that he intended to make a long stay.

Wonderful stories were circulated in the village about him. Honourable men took these stories with a pinch of salt, and many let him know quite plainly what they thought about them.

However, he visited old Veit daily, told him about his travels, how he had been to Egypt, and even across the further seas, and the old man enjoyed his company, and missed him when he did not come and spend the evening in his study.

He heard gossip from his neighbours, but did not take much notice, though one thing did rather puzzle him, and that was that Hans Heiling shut himself up in his house every Friday for the whole day alone. So he asked him what he did at these times. "A vow," was the reply,

"keeps me every Friday in silent prayer." Veit was reassured. Hans came and went as before, and made his intentions towards Elizabeth more and more apparent. But Elizabeth had a horror of the man, her blood froze when she looked at him.

He then made his formal proposal to the old man, who told him to try his luck with the girl herself. For this Hans chose an evening when Veit was not at home.

Elizabeth was sitting at her spinning-wheel. She rose, alarmed, as he entered, and informed him that her father was not at home. "Oh, then let us have a little talk together, my girl," was his reply, and he sat down beside her. Elizabeth drew herself away. Hans, taking this for maidenly shyness, and believing that one must be bold with women, if one wants to win them, took hold of her, and said in a tender voice, "Will not the lovely Elizabeth sit next to me?" But she tore herself away from him, saying, "It is not right for me to be alone with you," and made to leave the room, when again he took her in his arms. "Your father gave his consent, Elizabeth. Will you be my wife? I will not let you go till you say 'yes.'" But she fought against his kisses, which burnt her cheeks. In vain she cried for help. His passion getting the better of him, Hans was becoming bolder, when he caught sight of a crucifix on Elizabeth's neck, that her mother had given her. Suddenly he let her go, he seemed to tremble, and hurried out of the room. Elizabeth thanked God for her escape. When her father returned she told him what had happened. He was very upset. At the earliest opportunity he taxed Hans about his behaviour. Hans excused himself on the grounds of his great love. For many days afterwards she was left alone, as he appeared to wish to avoid her. She wore prominently displayed upon her breast the cross which had been her salvation, and she could not help noticing that as long as she continued to wear it, Heiling left her in peace.

The third year was drawing to a close. On every occasion when her engagement to Heiling was mentioned by her father she was able to turn the conversation, and from day to day she became more hopeful. She continued to visit old Arnold's grave daily, and then, crossing the Eger, would climb the hill overlooking the road to Prague, always hoping that she might meet her returning lover.

About this time, one morning early, she missed the cross, so dear to her. It must have been taken from her neck. For she never took it off, and she did not for a moment suspect the maid, whom she had seen the evening before whispering with Heiling behind the house.

With tears in her eyes, she related the loss to her father. He laughed at her suspicions of Heiling, who, he said, would not trouble with such trifles, and suggested she must have lost it somewhere else.

Nothing, however, would change her opinion—as Heiling continued to renew his advances, even more ardently than before. At the same time her father grew firmer with her as day followed day, and at last insisted that she should accept Heiling's hand. He was firmly convinced that Arnold had forgotten her, and in any case the three years was nearly up. In the presence of her father, Heiling swore his eternal love. It was not for her fortune, it was for herself alone. He was rich, and would make her happier and richer than she had ever dreamed of being.

But Elizabeth despised both him and his wealth. Hemmed in on either side and tortured with the thought of Arnold's unfaithfulness or death, she began to see no other way out but to consent. But she begged for three days more—for she was always hoping for, and looking forward to, the return of her real lover.

The three days were granted to her. Hopeful now that their wish would be granted, the two men parted from her and left the house.

At that moment the parish priest, accompanied by the

sacristan, passed by on their way to administer the last Sacrament to a dying man. Elizabeth bowed before the crucifix, and even Veit knelt down, but his companion, with a look of fear, hid himself in the nearest house. Veit looked at him in astonishment mixed with anger, and returned home puzzled.

Soon after a messenger came from Heiling to say that his master had been overcome by faintness, would Veit come to him at once, and not think the worst? The latter made the sign of the cross, saying, " I wish I could be sure that it was only a faint."

Meanwhile Elizabeth sat on a hill from which she could see the road to Prague, weeping and praying. A cloud appeared in the distance; her heart beat faster, but when it cleared and she could see a troop of smart horsemen, her hopes were dashed to the ground again. At their head rode a fine-looking man with grey hair; on his left a handsome youth who seemed to be urging his horse on, though the older man was endeavouring to restrain him. Elizabeth was bashful before so many men, and dropped her eyes. Suddenly the young man jumped from his horse and fell on his knees before her. " Elizabeth, is it possible? my dear faithful Elizabeth! " Alarmed, the girl helped him up, exclaiming joyfully, " Arnold, my Arnold! " and fell into his arms, and so they remained for some time, lips meeting, and heart to heart. Arnold's companions stood delighted by the side of the happy couple. The elderly man folded his hands and thanked God as the last rays of the sun shone down on them.

When the lovers had recovered from their joy, neither knew who should tell their news first. Eventually Elizabeth began, and in a few words related her unhappy experiences and described her position regarding Heiling. Arnold was horrified at the thought that he might have lost her. The elder man asked them about Heiling, then suddenly exclaimed, " Yes, my friends, that is the rascal who got into

trouble in my part of the country, only evading the arm of the law by flight. Let us be thankful we can frustrate his evil designs." After much discussion about Elizabeth and Heiling they arrived at the village rather late.

Elizabeth led Arnold triumphantly to her father, who could scarcely believe his eyes as he beheld the smart horsemen arrive. "Father of my Elizabeth," began Arnold, "here I am to claim your daughter's hand. I have become a man of wealth with a fine position, and am able to do even more than I promised."—"What?" cried Veit. "You are the humble Arnold, son of my neighbour?"

"Yes, it is the same man," replied the older traveller for him, "it is the same man who left his village three years ago a poor youth. He came to me, and I soon saw that he could be master of his Art, and so gave him work. He gave great satisfaction, and I was soon able to make him manager of the most important contracts. He has become famous in many large cities, and now he is to do his masterpiece in Prague. He is rich and honoured by dukes and princes. Fulfil your promise now and give him your daughter. The man you would have given her to is a scoundrel and deserves nothing more than the gallows. I know the wretch."—"Is this all true you tell me?" exclaimed Veit. "Quite true," they all cried together.

"The best of luck to you, Master," said Veit, turning to Arnold. "Take the girl, and God's blessing be with you."

Words failing them, they fell at his feet and he took them to his heart, and love at last was rewarded. "Herr Veit," began the elderly man, after a long silence, only broken by the murmurs of the lovers, "Herr Veit, I have one small favour to ask of you; let the children be married to-morrow, so that I can have the pleasure of seeing Arnold happy, for I love him like a son. The day after to-morrow I must return to Prague."—"Certainly," cried Veit, who had grown quite merry, "if it is your wish. Children," he called the lovers, "there shall be a wedding to-morrow,

it shall be in the farmhouse at Egerberg. I will arrange with the priest at once."

And continuing he said, "Elizabeth, go at once to the kitchen and prepare to entertain our honoured guests."

Elizabeth obeyed, and the fact that Arnold soon followed, so that they could be together later in the garden, was only natural.

After the first excitement of their meeting, the devoted son thought of his father's grave, and they wandered together to the place where they had parted so sorrowfully before.

At the grave they renewed their troth, both were so happy. "This moment of bliss makes up for the three years," whispered Arnold, embracing his bride to be. "This is the happiest moment of our lives, and yet later on it may be even much more wonderful." And Elizabeth said, "Oh, that we might die like this, in each other's arms. Dear Lord, do not think we are not grateful for all you have given us."—"Yes, Elizabeth, let us pray on my father's grave, and thank Heaven for all we have received." The prayer was silent and fervent. Sanctified, the lovers returned to the house.

The following morning was beautiful. It was Friday, and the feast of St. Laurence. The whole village was agog, and in every doorway stood men and girls dressed in their best. Veit was rich, and the wedding was all in readiness. Heiling's doorway was closed, for it was Friday, when he was never to be seen. Soon the procession formed that was to accompany the happy pair to the church. Veit and Arnold's chief walked together, shedding tears of joy over their children. For the banquet Veit had chosen the open place under the large lime tree in the middle of the village. To this spot the procession proceeded. The sun shone brightly, as did the eyes of the lovers.

The feast lasted for several hours, during which the toast rang out constantly, "Long live Arnold and his lovely bride."

From the lime tree the happy couple went to the farmhouse, accompanied by their parents and some of Elizabeth's friends.

The house lay beautifully situated behind the thicket in the entrance to the valley. In these happy surroundings the moments passed joyfully for Arnold and Elizabeth. The bridal chamber was also prepared in the farmhouse, and in the fruit-laden orchard, a friendly and costly meal awaited the guests.

Dusk was falling in the valley, but the merry throng did not notice the fading daylight, and presently a beautiful starlight night greeted the pair, now intoxicated with happiness.

Veit began to speak of his own youth, and the wine made him so talkative so that it was near midnight. Arnold and Elizabeth longed for him to finish his stories. At last he finished, cried, "Good-night, children," as he took the bridal pair to the door of their chamber. As the clock in the village struck twelve, a fearful wind storm suddenly got up. Hans Heiling stood amongst the horrified population with distorted features. "Satan!" cried he, "I call upon you to destroy these people."—"Then you will be mine!" shrieked a voice out of the storm. "Even if I become yours and all the pains of hell await me, annihilate them!" Fierce flames then appeared over the hill, whereupon Arnold and Elizabeth, Veit and his friends were turned into rock, the bride and groom clasped in each others arms, the rest with hands folded in an attitude of prayer.

"Hans Heiling," thundered the voice out of the storm. "They are blessed in death, and their souls are soaring to heaven. But your work is ended and you remain mine." Hans Heiling then flung himself into the foaming Eger, which engulfed him in its swirling waters. No one ever saw him again.

Early on the following morning Elizabeth's friends brought flowers for the newly wedded pair, followed by

the inhabitants of the whole village. But the hand of destruction was visible everywhere. They were able to recognise the features of their friends imprinted on the rocks. With loud sobs they strewed the flowers around the stone images of their loved ones. Then all fell on their knees, praying for the souls of the departed. The deathly silence was at length broken by the voice of a venerable old man. "Blessed are they," he cried, "for they departed in love and happiness. They died in each other's arms. Let us always put flowers on their graves. These rocks shall remain a monument, proving that no evil spirit can have power over pure hearts, and love that is faithful unto death."

From that time all young lovers made pilgrimages to the Rocks of Hans Heiling, asking a blessing from the departed ones.

This pious custom no longer obtains, but the legend remains dear to the hearts of the people. And even nowadays a guide will point out the stone monument into which Elizabeth and Arnold, her father and his companions, were turned.

Some years ago the Eger overflowed its banks at the place where Hans Heiling threw himself into the river and none would pass without crossing themselves and commending their souls to God.

THE SISTERS

(*Published in* 1817)

(Translated by Robert Pearse Gillies)

It happened once at Mannheim, in the year 175–, late in the month of October, that there had been a frightful tempest through the night. The roads were become almost impassable from the rain, and three young ladies, who had been for some time inseparable companions in the public gardens, found themselves debarred of their usual promenade. Amelia and Maria would by no means be prevented from making their appearance, at the hour appointed, in the house of their friend Florentine, for she had through the last fortnight been so reserved, melancholy, and nervous, that they had no doubt the storm must have alarmed and disturbed her exceedingly. Indeed, there had been wind, rain, hail, and thunder—enough to banish sleep from the couch of every inhabitant in the town. Just as they expected, Florentine came to receive them, evidently in great agitation, and embraced them, even with more than usual affection. "A fine morning for our excursion!" said Amelia, trying to assume a tone of pleasantry. "How have you got through that awful night?"—"Not very tranquilly, as you may suppose," said Florentine: "this house, you are aware, is none of the best; the situation too is exposed; and I thought every moment it would have been blown down about our ears." "It is well, then, that you are not to remain in it long," said Maria, smiling rather archly. "Aye, very true," replied Florentine; "to-morrow is the day fixed for the Count's return from Italy. His last letter

was dated from Berne. He is in hopes that our marriage will take place immediately, and that we shall set out directly afterwards for his grand castle near Hanover."

"He is only in hopes, then?" said Maria. "You pronounced these words, too, in a tone so mysterious that I could almost think you intended to disappoint him——" "Not I, indeed!" answered Florentine; "but how many hopes of this life are, unawares, blighted in the bud!" "Dearest Florentine!" said Maria, again embracing her, "for a long time already my sister and I have been perplexing ourselves in vain to find out what could have thus destroyed the wonted high spirits of our beloved friend. To say the truth, we have tormented ourselves with the thought that perhaps some family considerations might have constrained you to this marriage with the Count, and that it is quite against your own wishes." "Family considerations!" answered Florentine. "Alas! you forget that I am now quite alone in the world. Our race is almost extinct; for I am the only branch that is not already mouldering in the ancestral vaults. Besides, have I not confessed to you that I love the Count with my whole heart? Or did you think that I had lost all regard for truth, when, about a month ago, I gave you such a brilliant description of his character?" "Nay, how can we know what to believe?" said Maria. "Is it not an obvious and unaccountable contradiction that a betrothed bride, as you are, possessed too of beauty, fortune, and talents, moreover who has not to encounter the pain of leaving a beloved domestic circle, should, in spite of all this, look forward with visible apprehension and melancholy to her marriage-day?"

Florentine gave a hand to each of her friends. "You are, indeed, too good, and too anxious about me," said she: "I ought to be ashamed of having so long kept up that mysterious reserve of which you complain. At this moment, indeed, I am not well enough to enter on any explanations; but some time to-day I shall speak with you more com-

posedly, and all will be cleared up. For the present, I beseech you, let us choose some other subject." The violent nervous excitement which Florentine betrayed made her friends readily comply with this suggestion, and, as usual on such occasions, they had again recourse to the weather. Amelia began to describe, as humorously as she could, all the effects and varieties of last night's tempest, till Maria interrupted in rather a serious tone: "In truth, I must confess that for my own part I thought frequently there was somewhat far more than usual or natural in the disturbances of that storm. Many times it seemed to me as if the window of our bedroom was opened and shut again. I could have believed that some one had come in, and was drawing nearer and nearer to my bed. I heard the sound of measured steps on the floor—tramp, tramp—so that I shivered with terror, and hid myself, as fast as possible, under the bedclothes." "Oh!" cried Amelia, "don't speak of this, I beseech you! I dare not tell you how often I myself have heard such noises, though I have never in my life seen anything more than ordinary." "So much the better; God grant that you never may!" The solemn tone and disquietude of eye, with which these words were pronounced alarmed her friends. "Have *you*, then, ever seen an apparition?" said Amelia. "Not exactly—not in the sense in which you have put the question," replied Florentine, "and yet—— However, you must for a while suspend your curiosity. In the evening, if I live—I mean if I should be better then—I shall tell you all."

Maria here twitched her sister by the sleeve, and the latter directly understood the signal. They both concluded that Florentine would willingly be left alone, and anxious as they felt on account of her evident low spirits, it was not likely that the prolonged intrusion of their company would now do her any service. In taking her shawl from the table, Maria made a discovery that proved more than ever her friend's state of mind. She found a large prayer-book open,

in which Florentine had been reading, and on glancing at the rubric she saw, "Hymns for the dying, and prayers for the dead." An icy-cold shudder shook her frame as she read these words, and the friends parted with tears and sobs, even though their separation was to be for so short a time—almost as if they were never to meet again in this world.

At last, however, the wished-for evening interview drew on, and the sisters were delighted to find that Florentine was able to receive them with perfect cheerfulness, as if every painful impression of the morning had been forgotten. "You must excuse all my folly at your last kind, kind visit," said she, "for in truth I had been quite worn out by want of sleep and the constant alarm of that terrible night. Besides, I thought that I was on the very brink of the grave—I could not banish this apprehension—therefore after you had gone I wrote out my last will and testament, which is by this time deposited safely in the Council Chamber with the Magistrates. However, since dinner I have had two hours of sound sleep, and feel myself so much recovered that I could almost laugh at all my terrors of the morning." "But, my dearest Florentine," said Maria, "who in all the world would be led to fancies like these—who would think of approaching death, or the necessity of writing one's last will, merely on account of a sleepless night and a thunderstorm?" "Nay, nay," answered Florentine, "this would be very absurd; and I by no means wish you to suppose that the tempest alone caused my distress of mind. My feelings were indeed wound up already to a point which rendered any farther excitement unnecessary and superfluous. But it is time for me to give over speaking in riddles, and to fulfil my promise. You must be prepared to hear details which are not a little extraordinary—perhaps almost incredible. In the first place, however, let us order a blazing fire, for if my stories alone are enough to freeze the blood, it is better that the cold, damp air of this room should not add its influence."

While the servants kindled the fire and laid some billets of wood on the hearth for keeping it up, Maria and her sister expressed their satisfaction and delight at finding such an improvement in Florentine's state of mind and spirits; the latter also assured them that she was relieved beyond measure by the resolution she had taken to share with them that load of mysterious apprehension to which she had been so long subjected. So when the servants retired, and they took their places round the fire, she began as follows:

"You were both well acquainted with my dear sister Seraphina, but yet there was not one individual but myself who had been in reality admitted to her confidence. Therefore, before I come to the story of which she is the proper heroine, it will be requisite that I should tell you somewhat more than you could have guessed of her true character. Even in her earliest infancy Seraphina appeared quite different from all other children. She was a year younger than me, yet when we were placed in the nursery with all our playthings around us, and I was quite lost to myself and all the world in the amusement which they afforded, she would sit, even for hours together, with her eyes fixed on the ground, and no one could guess what really attracted her attention. In short, she took no interest either in the amusements or the tasks of other children; but our father and mother did not give themselves much concern about this matter. They concluded, indeed, that Seraphina's abstraction was owing merely to a bluntness of perception and feelings, which would always prove a formidable obstacle against her acquisition of those accomplishments suited to her rank. It was proposed, therefore, to send her to a convent, where the Sisters devoted their leisure hours to the instruction of young ladies; when, unexpectedly, an old clergyman, who had long been employed to give lessons in our family, assured Seraphina's friends that he had never in all his life met with any child whose mind was more

susceptible and powerful than hers. From henceforward, then, our house was constantly beset with masters for languages, drawing, dancing, music, and so forth; but it was soon found that, among so many pursuits, there was only *one* in which Seraphina would make any progress. The grammarians, painters, and dancing-masters shrugged their shoulders, and declared that their attendance was in vain; while, on the other hand, the musicians were nonplussed for a very different reason; for Seraphina soon excelled in this art all her instructors. More especially, her *voice* was so exquisite that not one of our opera-singers could compare with her.

"My father perceived, therefore, that his plans for this extraordinary child's education were at one time too confined, at another too excursive—in short that, for the future, he must allow her to follow the bent of her own disposition. Consequently, Seraphina took an opportunity of requesting that she might be allowed to take instructions in a science which, probably, no one would ever have thought of recommending to her—namely, that of astronomy. It is impossible to conceive with what impassioned eagerness she seized upon and studied every work that treated of the stars, or with what rapture she received the telescopes of which my father made her a present at Christmas, when she was in her thirteenth year. But in a short time astronomy was not sufficient to satisfy her imagination. She revived the old and forgotten study of astrology; and many times, to the great vexation of her friends, she was found absorbed over horoscopes which she had herself drawn, after attentively surveying the stars. My mother died not long after Seraphina had begun these extraordinary employments, and on her death-bed she wished, with her last blessing, to warn her daughter against them; but weakness had increased rapidly, and she was unable to speak as she intended. It was hoped that, in time, such absurd studies would lose their influence on Seraphina's mind; but, on

the contrary, she seemed to persevere in them even more than ever.

"You are aware, my dear friends, how much she was admired at Court, how graceful was her figure, how glossy and luxuriant her hair—above all, how unequalled in beauty were her large blue eyes, which oftentimes shone, indeed, with a kind of supernatural lustre, that the beholders felt in their very hearts, but which no poet could ever adequately describe. Many offers of marriage were made to her, in vain; and for the most part, you know, her time was spent either in seclusion or with me alone for her companion. She had a great dislike to fine dresses and outward show of any kind, avoiding, as much as possible, all occasions where such parade would have been required of her. It was but among those who were quite ignorant of her real character that such conduct could have been ascribed to affectation.

"Seraphina was in her fifteenth year when, by mere accident, I made the discovery of a phenomenon in her existence which filled me with such terror that through my whole life I have never thoroughly recovered from the impression of that adventure. I had been out making some visits, and on my return found Seraphina standing at the window of my father's study, seemingly absorbed in deep reverie, and with her eyes fixed like those of a marble statue. I had been so accustomed to those moods of silent abstraction that though I wished her to speak, I did not like to disturb her, but looked from the window into the garden, where, to my utter astonishment, I saw my father walking, and with him the identical Seraphina who now stood motionless beside me. 'Heaven have mercy!' cried I aloud, and ready to faint, but at that moment the form that had till now stood like a lifeless statue began to move. I looked again to the garden, and saw that my father was alone, and was gazing around him as if perplexed by the absence of his companion.

"I dared not alarm Seraphina by asking her many questions, but she, on the other hand, was exceedingly anxious to know the cause of my agitation. I evaded the subject as well as I could, but asked if she had been long in the study? 'Nay, Florentine,' said she with a smile. 'What means this? You should know best how to answer that inquiry. I came hither after you, and had been walking in the garden. At least I think so—but am not very sure.'

"This half-consciousness of what had just taken place would not alone have surprised me, as she would often be so absent as to forget all that passed around her. But just then my father came into the room. 'Seraphina,' said he rather sternly, 'tell me how you got out of my sight all of a sudden? You know I was just about to answer what you had said, when I found that you had disappeared in the shrubbery. I sought you there in vain, and now you are in the house before me!' 'It is very strange!' answered she, 'and for my own part I know not how all this has happened!' From that hour I was forced to believe the assertions of people, who had insisted, that at the very time when we knew that Seraphina was sitting at home and in our presence, she had been seen elsewhere. Besides, I recollected that, during her childhood, she often used to speak of being carried away from this earth; whether in dreams or supernaturally was unexplained, and that she had been with angels in heaven; to which circumstance were attributed her disregard and indifference when her young companions wished her to join in their usual plays.

"My father, however, would never believe any of these rumours, nor would he now listen to what I told him privately of Seraphina being visible at one and the same moment in the library and the garden. 'Say no more, I command you,' he exclaimed. 'I have heard quite enough of those wonders and miracles with which your own imagination so amply supplies you. It is true, indeed, that Seraphina's character is extraordinary. She is by no means like

other young people of the same age and rank; but as to her appearing in different places at one moment, or her intercourse with supernatural beings and the world of spirits, I shall certainly *never* be persuaded into the belief of such absurdity.' Alas! my father did not reflect that when we poor mortals speak of our own *future* conduct and feelings the word *never* is one which may not be used rashly!

"About a year and a half afterwards there took place another adventure, which was well calculated to overturn all his usual opinions. One Sunday Seraphina and I were both reminded of a visit, for which we had been engaged long before; but though she always regretted our separation even for a short interval, yet she would give up my society when, as on the present occasion, it must be retained at the expense of going to a crowded party. Even the preliminary task of dressing for such an assembly was to her an insupportable torment, for she recollected all the while that this trouble was for no other purpose but to bring her amidst a circle of people whose shallow intellects and affected politeness were in the utmost degree repulsive and disgusting. Besides, she never failed, at these large parties, to meet with individuals whose physiognomies were such that she could not speak to them without shuddering, and even whose presence for a short time made her really ill for several days afterwards.

"On this occasion, when the hour approached she wished that I should go without her, when my father, suspecting what would happen, came into our room and insisted that she should alter her intentions. 'One cannot renounce the world altogether,' said he, 'and there are some invitations, which it is our indispensable duty to accept.' In fine, he gave an absolute command that Seraphina should dress as quickly as possible and go with me. I had just before sent away my waiting-maid, so that my sister herself took the light and went upstairs for her ball-dress, which hung in a narrow closet, or rather press, adjoining a large room on the floor above.

"She stayed a longer time than could have been required for an errand of this kind, and when she at last returned her whole appearance was so much changed that I could not help uttering a scream of terror. My father, too, exclaimed in a tone of anxiety and compassion, 'Child! child! What in all the world has happened to you?' She had not been absent above a quarter of an hour, yet the expression of her features was completely altered: there never was much colour in her cheeks, but now they were of an ashy paleness, and even her lips were of a death-like hue. Almost unconscious of what I did, I ran to embrace her. I could not speak; only my looks implored that she would explain what misfortune had happened to her. For a long time, however, she lay in my arms, silent and motionless, and it was but the kind and affectionate expression of her bright blue eyes by which we could know that her attention was not wholly withdrawn from this world.

"'It was a sudden illness that seized me,' she said at length—'one of my old nervous attacks; but I am much better already, and shall be quite well soon.' Then she inquired if my father still wished that she should go to the party, but under present circumstances he, of course, allowed that this would be hazardous, insisting, however, that I should go, though I urged, as much as I dared, that my attendance would be indispensable for Seraphina; yet in the end I was obliged to set out, though to part from her at such a time grieved me to the heart. I had ordered the carriage at an early hour to bring me away, yet my disquietude was so great that I could not wait for it, and at last determined on walking home, attended by a friend's servant, who could scarcely keep pace with me, for, indeed, I ran all the way.

"Arrived at home, however, my impatience to be with her again was not immediately gratified, for I found her apartment deserted. 'Where is she?' I demanded with vehemence. 'Mademoiselle Seraphina,' said the lackey,

'is in His Excellency's cabinet.'—'Alone, then?'—'No, she is with His Excellency.' I hastened to the study, and found the door locked against me. However, when they heard my voice it was opened immediately, and they both came to meet me. Seraphina was in tears, and my father was agitated to a degree which I should have thought impossible in a State Minister of his talents and experience. She at once understood my anxious looks, and took my arm, that we might retire together, but, before going, she was obliged to tranquillise my father by an assurance that she would remember her promise, of which I knew not then the cause or purport. For some time after we had come into our own room Seraphina seemed so much overpowered by conflicting emotions that I was almost afraid to speak to her, but at last, when I ventured to express my anxious wish to know what had happened above stairs, she said, 'Your curiosity must so far be gratified—at least I can explain to you *part* of this mystery—but not without making one explicit condition, to which, in the first place, you must agree solemnly. In short, you must swear to be satisfied with that which I disclose to you—not to misuse your influence over my heart, in order to bring out farther discoveries, nor even to express a desire of knowing that which I am bound to conceal from you!'—'Well, then, I do swear!'—'And now, dearest Florentine,' she continued, 'forgive me that for the first time in my life I should thus have thoughts in which you cannot share, and for the first time, too, have looked on your mere promise as insufficient; but my father has compelled me to this course, and it was to this he alluded in that anxious tone when we parted to-night.'—I only begged that she would come to an explanation within the prescribed limits, and at last she began:—

"'I cannot describe to you what an irresistible pressure of low spirits—almost of despair—had come over me when I went for my ball-dress. When I had shut the door of this room, and was on my way upstairs, I could not help feeling

as if I were to part from you, and from this life; yet that I had a long and dreary pilgrimage to go through—many dark nights of suffering and sorrow—before I could reach any home of rest. Certainly, the very air which I then inhaled was not the same element by which we are usually surrounded; indeed, I could scarcely breathe, and the pain of that conflict was such that I felt cold drops, as if in the struggle with death, break out on my forehead. It is most certain, too, that I was not then *alone* on the staircase, though for a long while I did not venture to look round.

" ' You already know, Florentine, how fervently I prayed after our mother's death—but in vain—that she would once more appear and speak with me. Now I thought her ghost was moving behind me, and had come to punish and reprove me for my presumption in those prayers; yet it was a strange and foolish fancy: that she who was ever so good and kind could thus have been offended by an affectionate daughter's wish to see her again; especially, too, when many years were elapsed since that wish had been framed; and I felt so conscious of my own inconsistency that at last I took courage and looked for the ghost; but whether my senses were too confused to discern objects, or that no one was there, I cannot tell. I did not perceive anything unusual, yet as I advanced on the staircase I heard anew, and always more distinctly, the sound of steps following close behind me. I came to the room door on the corridor, however, but there my gown was held fast; I could proceed no farther, and sank down on the threshold in an agony of fear.

" ' In a few moments afterwards I luckily discovered by the light of my candle, which had not been extinguished, that in this last accident there was nothing supernatural—my dress had caught hold of an old chest of drawers, with rough brass handles, which had been placed in the corridor, to be removed on the following day. This gave me new courage; I felt indignant at my own folly, rose and went on to the

clothes' press, but think only, Florentine, what must have been my horror when, just as I was about to lay my hand on the lock, the folding-doors opened of themselves without noise, my candle was extinguished, and precisely as if I walked up to a mirror, I saw myself advancing from the closet. The figure was like a picture painted on a dark ground, visible by its own light, and giving out a kind of effulgence, by which many other objects in the room were also to be distinguished. "Tremble not, fear not!" said a voice, "I am thine own SPIRIT, thy SECOND SELF, and am come to announce thy death, which is near at hand, and the fate which hangs over thy whole race!" Thereafter the spectre explained to me many events that are yet to come. I listened with a degree of calmness and reflection which is to myself wonderful, and just as I had proposed a question on your *account*, feeling most anxious, the room became utterly dark, and all traces of the supernatural visitation were gone. This, my dearest Florentine,' concluded Seraphina, 'is all that I am permitted to tell you.'

"'Good Heaven!' cried I, 'your death, then, is near at hand?' For that thought at the moment completely overpowered every other in my mind. Seraphina only nodded her assent, but at the same time made a sign that, even on this point, I must not venture any farther questions. My father, she added, had given her his promise that, when the proper time came, he would himself afford me the needful explanations.—'When the proper time comes!' I repeated in a half-reproachful tone; for after I had been told so much, and must undergo, in consequence, such grief and agitation, it seemed to me already full time that I should hear all the rest. I begged an interview with my father that same evening, and acquainted him with what had passed, but to my request for more information he remained inexorable. He said also that Seraphina's adventure might, after all, have been but the natural effect of a highly excited and disordered imagination. But as on the

third day afterwards my sister was indeed taken ill, and was confined to bed, his disbelief seemed nearly quite overcome, and though I had not yet learned that her dying day had been prophesied, I perceived too well from her deadly paleness, and the looks with which she regarded us, that her last moments were fast approaching. In the evening we were sitting beside her, and she had been for some time engaged in prayer, when suddenly she inquired, 'Has the clock not yet struck nine?' 'Not yet, but it is near the hour,' answered my father. 'Well, then, you will not forget me,' said Seraphina, grasping my hand. 'Ere long we shall meet again!' Just as the clock began to strike nine she sank back on her pillow and expired!

"All this I have repeated from the account given me by my father, for I was so completely overcome by the agony of my own feelings that during that dreadful day of Seraphina's illness I knew not what passed around me. It was not till after her death that I awoke again to self-consciousness—to resume my part in a world which now appeared to me like a desert. Besides, I could not help reproaching myself that the state into which I was brought by my anxiety and horror must have made me appear to Seraphina as if I were wanting in due attention to her in her last moments. Even to this hour I never can think of that scene without shuddering. After the day of her funeral my father sat with me here in this room at the same hour in the evening. 'You must be aware, Florentine,' said he, 'that the time is not yet arrived to explain to you the farther prophecies of the apparition, as it has been called.' I did not urge for any explanations, but could not help adding, 'And yet, after a share of those prophecies, whatever they were, has been so frightfully fulfilled, can you speak of the apparition as if it were a delusion?' 'Alas, my dear child,' answered my father, 'you know not what a mysterious and dangerous companion every mortal has in his own imagination, and Seraphina will not be the last victim of this enemy!' We

were sitting, as I have said, in this room, just as we are now, placed near the fire, which was nearly burned out, and I was about to answer what he had said when I perceived that his looks were directed towards the door, with an expression of anxious and fearful attention. I could not discern any reason for this; however, in the next minute, the door opened suddenly—though we heard no steps, nor did any one appear——"

Here Florentine paused, as if overcome by her recollections, and Amelia, with a loud scream, started up from her chair. Her friends inquired what had disturbed her; but she seemed afraid to answer, and would by no means return to her chair, of which the back was turned to the door. At length, looking round the room with a pale, timid expression, she confessed that, just as Florentine had pronounced the last words "nor did any one appear," she had felt on her neck the pressure of an ice-cold hand. "*There* indeed we had no proof of delusive imagination," exclaimed Maria, "as for the ice-cold hand, it was no other than mine, for I had been leaning on your chair, and when, as I thought, Florentine was about to tell us of another ghost, I felt an impulse to cling, as if for protection, to some being that I knew was living and corporeal. But what happened then?" "It was strange enough!" continued Florentine. "I started when the door opened, drew nearer to my father, and asked him whether he did not perceive a kind of effulgence coming from the door? It was not the gleam of the moon—nor of a candle nor lamp, but I thought of what Seraphina had described of the figure seen by its own light, and believed that the spectre was again there. My father answered me with a calmness which I thought was affected, for his voice faltered, 'Well, Florentine, if I did see the light of which you speak, might not this too be a delusion of our own disordered senses? We have both suffered deeply in the loss of that beloved and gentle being, nor can it be wondered at if our imaginations were even in the same state of excite-

ment with her own. Besides, that a door should open, though no one enters, can be explained very naturally, and has happened a thousand times ere now.' 'On such occasions one generally closes it again,' said I, without, however, feeling courage to carry my suggestion into effect. 'That is very easily done,' said my father. He rose and walked a few paces, trembled visibly, and turned back. 'After all, we had best leave it open,' added he, 'for the room has for some time been much too warm.' Of the light, as I have said, I can give no exact description, nor can compare it with aught that I have seen before, nor since—but had my sister's ghost entered, I should have flown with open arms to meet her. It was the mysterious and awful *uncertainty* of that effulgence that made me look on it with horror. Soon afterwards several of our servants came with candles to arrange the supper-table, and nothing more occurred that was extraordinary.

"The lapse of time could not efface or diminish our remembrance of Seraphina, but had its usual influence in lessening the impression of that evening's adventure. Not long afterwards I had the pleasure of becoming acquainted with my dear friends Amelia and Maria, in whose society I have agreeably spent many an hour that would otherwise have been lost in painful reflections, and as to the remaining prophecies, whose fulfilment yet hung over us, I endeavoured to banish them as much as possible from my mind. You remember how beautiful and delightful that month of April was, after we first met together. It happened once that after walking beyond the usual hour you had returned home, but still the evening was so pleasant that I lingered alone in the gardens adjoining to our house. The pure blue sky above, the glowing tints of the west, and fragrant air were so enchanting that I quite forgot how the time passed, till a bat came oftentimes whirling and chirping round my head, and served as a monitor that I ought to have been within doors. At that moment, too, the thought came pain-

fully into my mind—ever since my sister's death, if I chanced to stay abroad till a late hour my father used to send one of the servants with a warm cloak or shawl, but now it seemed as if I were quite forgotten. At that idea I felt a chilliness in every limb, which the evening, though now become cool, could not have produced. By chance I was gazing at a walk shaded by fruit trees, now in full blossom, which had been a favourite haunt of Seraphina's, and methought I beheld *there* gleams of the same light which had alarmed us on the night after her funeral. I ran thither, in hopes that she herself might appear to me, but was disappointed—the light vanished, and I returned quickly homewards.

" On entering the house I found here also much that was unusual and perplexing. I had supposed that supper would have been kept waiting on my account, but it seemed not even to have been thought of—on the contrary, the servants were all running to and fro in the utmost confusion, packing up clothes, furniture, books and papers. ' What means all this—who is going to travel? ' said I.—' Good Heaven! do you not know? ' said my father's *chasseur*. ' His Excellency, you, Mademoiselle, and all of us.'—' At what time, then, and whither? '—' This very evening—to the country.'—' And for what reason? ' The man shrugged his shoulders without speaking, and I went to my father's study. ' Seraphina's second prophecy,' said he, ' has now been fulfilled; and this was of all the most improbable. I have been disgraced and deposed.'—' And this too she had anticipated? ' —' Precisely so; but I concealed it from you, of course. As for the rest, I submit willingly to this change of fortune, and leave my place as a Minister to one who may use more art and remain longer in favour. I shall go to my house in the country, and live only for your sake and that of my own faithful tenants and adherents.' Distressed to the heart, as I should have otherwise been by this misfortune, my father's equanimity and decision of character tranquillised my feelings. We set out at midnight, for he would

not remain here an hour longer than was absolutely requisite. During the journey he continued perfectly cheerful, and on arriving at the Castle found so much there to arrange which had long been, of necessity, delayed and neglected, that his active mind was at no loss for a proper sphere of exertion. Notwithstanding this, however, he was attacked, after some time, by an illness, which, from the commencement, the physicians declared to be dangerous. He followed the regimen which they prescribed, and avoided encountering too much fatigue either of mind or body—yet without entertaining, himself, any hopes of recovery. 'Seraphina,' he now said, 'was correct in two of her prophecies. For the third time, also, there is no doubt, that she will prove in the right!' I was dreadfully agitated when I discovered that, according to his own belief, death would soon overtake him. A change every day for the worse became obvious—he was confined to bed, and one evening desired to speak with me alone. 'Experience,' said he, 'has at length put an end to my disbelief. The ninth hour of this night is, according to Seraphina's divination, to be the hour of my death; and therefore, my dear child, I have a few words of admonishment to address to you. Remain, if it be possible, even as you are, unmarried and with your affections disengaged. It seems that Fate has determined on the final extinction of our family. More it is needless to say at present. But if you should ever meet with a lover worthy of your regard, remember, before your marriage day, to examine and read the sealed paper which I now give to you. It is my decided command, however, that you shall not look into it unless these circumstances occur, because you would otherwise occasion yourself needless disquietude.' At these words, to which I listened with sobs and tears, he drew from under his pillow and gave to me a small sealed packet, which I took, and have preserved according to his injunctions, but I thought then of what might be its contents. Every other feeling was overpowered in my affliction. He died peace-

fully, while I was supporting him, precisely as the clock struck nine. On the evening after his funeral the same unearthly radiance was seen in my chamber.

"You know that, being unable to support a life of solitude in the country, I came in a short time back to the capital, that I might enjoy the society of my two beloved friends. You are aware how long I remained inconsolable, but your ceaseless endeavours had succeeded in restoring me to cheerfulness, and I joined like others of my own age in the diversions of the *beau monde*. My father had, indeed, advised me to avoid marriage, but had made this no positive condition. Count Bruno paid his addresses, and appeared to me, in every respect, so amiable, that I could not help returning his affection. I believe, however, that my father had overlooked one effect, which, of necessity, followed his entrusting me with that mysterious packet; for if I never resolved on marriage, it was impossible that I could ever break the seal, or know what Seraphina had divined regarding me. As I had accepted the Count's proposal, and our nuptials were even fixed, there could be no reason for longer delay. I examined the paper, therefore, and shall now read to you its contents, which are as follows:

"'Seraphina no doubt informed you that when she wished to question the apparition about your future destiny the light and figure suddenly vanished. That supernatural being who, as I have reason to think, WAS THE GHOST OF AN UNFORTUNATE ANCESTRESS, had already announced that you must die at the *ninth hour* three days before that appointed for your wedding. Seraphina intended to put the question whether, by avoiding every such engagement, your life could be spared? Alas, no answer to this question; yet it is my conviction that on the path to the altar you can only arrive at your destruction. However, I left you no positive injunctions against marriage, because I knew not if by this means your death could have been averted. Think what you ought to do, if it be not

already too late. Should it be possible for my spirit to return to the world, I shall hover near you when these lines are first read.' "

Florentine folded up the letter in silence, and a long pause of painful reflection occurred before another word was uttered by any one. At length, she resumed, " From the day on which I perused this letter must be dated that change in my disposition for which you, my dear friends, have sometimes reproached me. The time of our intended nuptials was fixed by the Count's letters from Berne before I consulted the warning; but say, would not any one in my situation be rendered miserable, even sunk in despondency by the thought that death inevitably awaits her with the approach of that event to which she had looked forward as the source of her greatest happiness? Now, then, I have told you all; for to-morrow the Count will certainly arrive. In two days afterwards we are to meet publicly at the altar of St. Mary's church."

" So, then, this very day," cried Amelia, turning deadly pale, and looking at a small clock on the secretaire, which was even now on the stroke of nine. " Yes, indeed," said Florentine, " yet I feel myself so much recovered, so much more cheerful than I have been for a long time, that methinks death cannot so soon overtake me. I have rather been impressed this evening with a belief that my so fondly cherished wish may be fulfilled—that my beloved sister will appear to me, and announce that the fearful prophecy has for once been revoked. Dearest Seraphina, thou wert so suddenly, so untimely taken from me, before I could prove how much I loved thee! Oh, might it be granted me but to see thee once more! "

Motionless with anxiety and terror, Amelia and Maria gazed on the clock, which now began to strike. The last glimmering flame of the wood fire died away, and the room was for a moment dark. " Welcome, oh, welcome! " cried Florentine, in a tone of rapture, and rose with her arms

extended, advancing to the door, which then opened. Amidst a radiance like that of the full moon in the midnight sky, the apparition of Seraphina appeared. Florentine flew into her embrace. "Thine for ever!" These words were heard, but no one knew who had pronounced them, or if both sisters had spoken at one moment.

Immediately the servants rushed into the apartment, for they had been alarmed by a sound as if all the glass and porcelain in the house had been broken with one great crash They found their beloved mistress lifeless on the threshold, and all attempts to restore her proved in vain. The physicians ascribed her death to natural causes; but Amelia and Maria thought far differently, and never, through their lives, forgot the horror of that night.

HEINRICH HEINE

(1800–1856)

I

THE RABBI OF BACHARACH

(Translated by CHARLES GODFREY LELAND ["HANS BREITMANN"])

I

ON the Lower Rhine, where its banks begin to lose their smiling aspect, where hills and cliffs with romantic ruined castles rise more defiantly, and a wild and sterner dignity prevails, there lies, like a strange and fearful tale of the olden time, the gloomy and ancient town of Bacharach. But these walls, with their toothless battlements and turrets, in whose nooks and niches the winds blew and the sparrows rest, were not always so decayed and fallen, and in these poverty-stricken, repulsive muddy lanes which one sees through the ruined tower, there did not always reign that dreary silence which is only now and then broken by crying children, scolding women, and lowing cows. These walls were once proud and strong, and these lanes were alive with a fresh, free life, power and pride, joy and sorrow, much love and much hate. For Bacharach of old belonged to those municipalities which were founded by the Romans during their rule on the Rhine; and its inhabitants, though the times which came after were sadly stormy, and though they had to submit first to the Hohenstaufen, and then to the Wittelsbach authority, managed, after the example of

the other cities on the Rhine, to maintain a tolerably free commonwealth. This consisted of an alliance of different social elements, in which the patrician elder citizens and those of the guilds which were subdivided according to their different trades, mutually strove for power, so that while they were bound in union to keep ward and guard against the robber-nobles, they nevertheless were obstinate in domestic dissensions waged for warring interests, the results of which were constant feuds, little social intercourse, much mistrust, and not seldom actual outbursts of passion. The lord warden sat on the high tower of Sareck, and darted downwards like his falcon, whenever called for, swooping also many a time uncalled. The clergy ruled in darkness by darkening the souls of others. One of the most distracted and helpless of bodies, gradually ground down by local laws, was the little Jewish community. This was first formed in Bacharach in the days of the Romans, and during the later persecution of the people it had taken in many a flock of fugitive co-religionists.

The great oppression of the Jews began with the crusades, and raged most furiously about the middle of the fourteenth century, at the end of the great pestilence, which was, like all other great public disasters, attributed to the Jews, because people declared they had drawn down the wrath of God, and with the help of the lepers had poisoned the wells. The enraged populace, especially the hordes of Flagellants, or half-naked men and women, who, lashing themselves for penance and singing a mad hymn to the Virgin, swept over South Germany and the Rhenish provinces, murdered in those days many thousand Jews, torturing others, or baptising them by force. There was another accusation which had come down from earlier times, and which through all the Middle Ages, even to the beginning of the last century, cost much blood and suffering. This was the ridiculous story, often repeated in chronicle and legend, that the Jews stole the consecrated wafer, and

stabbed it through with knives till blood ran from it. And to this it was added that at the feast of the Passover the Jews slew Christian children to use their blood in the night sacrifice.

Therefore on this festival the Jews, hated for their wealth, their religion, and the debts due to them, were entirely in the hands of their enemies, who could easily bring about their destruction by spreading the report of such a child-murder, and then secretly putting a bloody infant's corpse in the house of a Jew thus accused. Then there would be an attack by night on the Jews at their prayers, where there was murder, plunder, and baptism; and great miracles wrought by the dead child aforesaid, whom the Church eventually canonised. Saint Werner is one of these holy beings, and in his honour the magnificent abbey of Oberwesel was founded. It is now one of the most beautiful ruins on the Rhine, and which, with the Gothic grandeur of its long ogival windows, proudly high-shooting pillars, and marvellous stone-carving, so strangely enchants us when we wander by it on some gay, green summer's day, and do not know what was its origin. In honour of this saint three other great churches were built on the Rhine, and innumerable Jews murdered or maltreated. All this happened in the year 1287; and in Bacharach, where one of these Saint Werner's churches stood, the Jews suffered much misery and persecution. However, they remained for two centuries after, protected from such attacks of popular rage, though they were continually subject to enmity and threatening.

Yet the more hate oppressed them from without, the more earnestly and tenderly did the Jews of Bacharach cherish their domestic life within, and the deeper was the growth among them of piety and the fear of God. The ideal exemplar of a life given to God was seen in their Rabbi Abraham, who, though as yet a young man, was famed far and wide for his learning. Born in Bacharach,

his father, who had been the rabbi there before him, had charged him in his last will never to leave the place unless for fear of life. This command, and a cabinet full of rare books, was all which his parent, who lived in poverty and learning, left him. However, Rabbi Abraham was a very rich man, for he had married the only daughter of his paternal uncle, who had been a great dealer in jewellery, and whose possessions he had inherited. A few mischief-makers in the community hinted now and then that the rabbi had married for money. But the women one and all denied this, declaring it was a well-known story that the Rabbi, long ere he went to Spain, was in love with "Beautiful Sara," and how she waited for him seven years till he returned; he having already wedded her against the will of her father, and even her own inclination, by the betrothal-ring. For every Jew can make a Jewish girl his lawful wife, if he can put a ring on her finger, and say at the same time: "I take thee for my wife, according to the law of God and Israel." And when Spain was mentioned, the same gossips were wont to smile in the same significant manner, and all because of an obscure rumour that, though Rabbi Abraham had studied the holy law industriously enough at the high school of Toledo, yet that he had followed Christian customs and become imbued with habits of free thinking, like many Spanish Jews who had at that time attained a very remarkable degree of culture.

And yet in their hearts the tale-bearers put no faith in these reports; for ever since his return from Spain the daily life of the Rabbi had been to the last degree pure, pious, and earnest. He carried out the least details of all religious customs and ceremonies with painful conscientiousness; he fasted every Monday and Thursday—only on Sabbaths and feast days did he indulge in meat or wine; his time was passed in prayer and study; by day he taught the Law to the students, whom his fame had drawn to Bacharach, and

by night he gazed on the stars in heaven, or into the eyes of the beautiful Sara. His married life was childless, yet there was no lack of life or gaiety in the household. The great hall in his home, which stood near the synagogue, was open to the whole community, so that people went and came from it without ceremony, some offering short prayers, others exchanging news, or taking mutual counsel when in trouble. Here the children played of Sabbath mornings while the weekly "section" was read; here many met for wedding or funeral processions, and quarrelled or were reconciled; here, too, those who were cold found a warm stove, and the hungry a well-spread table. And, moreover, the Rabbi had a multitude of relations, brothers and sisters, with their wives and children, as well as an endless array of uncles and cousins, in common with his wife, all of whom looked up to the Rabbi as the head of the family, and so made themselves at home in his house, and never failed to dine with him on all great festivals. Special among these grand gatherings in the Rabbi's house was the annual celebration of the Passover, a very ancient and remarkable feast which Jews still hold every year in the month Nissen, in eternal remembrance of their deliverance from Egyptian captivity.

Which takes place as follows: As soon as it is dark the matron of the family lights the lamps, spreads the table-cloth, places in its midst three plates of unleavened bread, covers them with a napkin, and places on the pile six little dishes containing symbolical food, that is, an egg, lettuce, horse-radish, the bone of a lamb, and a brown mixture of raisins, cinnamon, and nuts. At this table the father of the family sits among relations and friends, and reads to them from a very curious book called the *Agade*, whose contents are a strange mixture of legends of their forefathers, wondrous tales of Egypt, questions of theology, prayers and festival songs. During this feast there is a grand supper, and even during the reading there is tasting of the sym-

bolical food and nibbling of Passover bread, while four cups of red wine are drunk. Mournfully merry, seriously gay, and mysteriously secret as some dark old legend is the character of this nocturnal festival, and the usual traditional singing intonation with which the *Agade* is read by the father, and now and then re-echoed in chorus by the hearers, at one time thrills the inmost soul as with a shudder, anon calms it as if it were a mother's lullaby, and anon startles it so suddenly into waking that even those Jews who have long fallen away from the faith of their fathers and run after strange joys and honours, are moved to their very hearts when by chance the old well-known tones of the Passover songs ring in their ears

And so Rabbi Abraham once sat in his great hall surrounded by relations, disciples, and many other guests, to celebrate the great feast of the Passover. All around was unusually brilliant; over the table hung the gaily embroidered silk canopy, whose gold fringes touched the floor; the plate with the symbolic food shone in a comfortable home-like way, as did the tall wine goblets, adorned with embossed images of holy legends. The men sat in their black cloaks and black broad-brimmed hats, with white collars; the women, in wonderful glittering garments of Lombard stuffs, wore on their heads and necks ornaments of gold and pearls, and the silver Sabbath lamps poured forth their pleasant light on the pleased faces of parents and children, happy in their piety. On the purple velvet cushions of a chair, higher than the others, and reclining as the Law enjoins, sat Rabbi Abraham, and read and sang the *Agade*, while the mixed assembly joined with him, or answered in the appointed places. The Rabbi also wore the appointed black festival garment, his nobly-formed but somewhat severe features wore a milder expression than usual, his lips smiled in the dark-brown beard as if they would fain tell something agreeable, while in his eyes there was an expression as of happy remembrances allied to some

strange foreboding. The beautiful Sara, who sat on the same high velvet cushion as her husband, wore, as hostess, none of her ornaments—only white linen enveloped her slender form and good and gentle face. This face was touchingly beautiful, even as all Jewish beauty is of a peculiarly moving kind; for the consciousness of the deep wretchedness, the bitter scorn, and the evil chances amid which her kindred and friends dwelt, gave to her lovely features a depth of sorrow and an ever-watchful apprehension of love, such as most deeply touches our hearts. So on this evening the fair Sara sat looking into the eyes of her husband, yet glancing ever and anon at the beautiful parchment book of the *Agade* which lay before her, bound in gold and velvet. It was an old heirloom, with ancient wine stains on it, which had come down from the days of her grandfather, and in which were many boldly and brightly-coloured pictures, which she had often as a little girl looked at so eagerly on Passover evenings, and which represented all kinds of Bible stories—how Abraham broke asunder with a hammer the idols of his father, how the angels came to him, how Moses slew Mizri, how Pharaoh sat in state on his throne, how the frogs gave him no peace even at table, how he—the Lord be praised!—was drowned, how the children of Israel went cautiously through the Red Sea; how they stood open-mouthed, with their sheep, cows, and oxen, before Mount Sinai; how pious King David played the harp; and, finally, how Jerusalem, with its towers and battlements, shone in the splendour of the setting sun.

The second wine-cup had been served, the faces and voices of the guests grew merrier, and the Rabbi, as he took a cake of unleavened bread and raised it, greeting gaily, read these words from the *Agade*: "See! This is the food which our fathers ate in Egypt! Let every one who is hungry come and enjoy it! Let every one who is sorrowful come and share the joys of our Passover!

In this year we celebrate it here, but in years to come in the land of Israel. This year we celebrate it in servitude, but in the years to come as sons of freedom!"

Then the hall-door opened, and there entered two tall, pale men, wrapped in very broad cloaks, who said: "Peace be with you. We are men of your faith on a journey, and wish to share the Passover-feast with you!" And the Rabbi replied promptly and kindly: "Peace be with you, sit ye down near me!" The two strangers sat down at the table, and the Rabbi read on. While the company conversed, he often cast a pleasant, petting word to his wife; and playing on the old saying that on this evening a Hebrew father of a family regards himself as a king, said to her, "Rejoice, oh my Queen!" But she replied, smiling sadly, "The Prince is wanting," meaning by that a son, who, as a passage in the *Agade* requires, shall ask his father, with a certain formula of words, what is the meaning of the festival? The Rabbi said nothing, but only pointed with his finger to a picture on the opened leaves of the *Agade*. It was quaintly and touchingly drawn, showing how the three angels came to Abraham, announcing that he would have a son by his wife Sara, who, meanwhile, urged by feminine curiosity, is listening slyly to it all behind the tent-door. This little sign caused a threefold blush to rise to the cheeks of Beautiful Sara, who looked down, and then glanced pleasantly at her husband, who went on chanting the wonderful story how Rabbi Jesua, Rabbi Eliezer, Rabbi Asaria, Rabbi Akiba, and Rabbi Tarphen sat reclining in Bona-Brak, and conversed all night long of the Exodus from Egypt till their disciples came to tell them it was daylight, and that the great morning prayer was being read in the synagogue.

As Beautiful Sara listened with devotion while looking at her husband, she saw that in an instant his face assumed an expression as of agony or despair, his cheeks and lips were deadly pale, and his eyes glanced like balls of ice; but

almost immediately he became calm and cheerful as before, his cheeks and lips grew ruddy, he looked about him gaily—nay, it seemed as if a mad and merry mood, such as was foreign to his nature, had seized him. Beautiful Sara was frightened as she had never been in all her life, and a cold shudder came over her—less from the momentary manifestation of dumb despair which she had seen in her husband's face, than from the joyousness which followed it, and which passed into rollicking jollity. The Rabbi cocked his cap comically, first on one ear, then on the other, pulled and twisted his beard funnily, sang the *Agade* texts like tavern-songs; and in the enumeration of the Egyptian plagues, where it is usual to dip the forefinger in the full wine-cup and cast the drops adhering to the earth, he sprinkled the young girls near him with the red wine, and there was great wailing over spoiled collars, and ringing laughter. At every instant Beautiful Sara became more awed at this convulsive merriment of her husband, and oppressed with nameless fears she gazed on the buzzing swarm of gaily glittering guests who comfortably spread or rocked themselves here and there, nibbling the thin Passover cakes, drinking wine, gossiping, or singing aloud full of joy.

Then came the time for supper. All rose to wash, and Beautiful Sara brought the great silver basin, richly adorned with embossed gold figures, which was presented to every guest, that he might wash his hands. As she held it to the Rabbi, he gave her a significant look, and quietly slipped out of the door. In obedience to the sign Beautiful Sara followed him, when he grasped her hand, and in the greatest haste hurried her through the dark lanes of Bacharach, out of the city gate to the highway which leads to Bingen along the Rhine.

It was one of the nights in spring which are indeed softly warm and starry withal, yet which inspire the soul with strange uncanny feelings. There was something of the

churchyard in the flowers, the birds sang peevishly and as if vexing themselves, the moon cast spiteful yellow stripes of light over the dark stream as it went murmuring away, the lofty masses of the Rhine cliffs looked dimly like quivering giants' heads, the watchman on the tower of Castle Strahleck blew a melancholy tune, and with it rang in jarring rivalry the funeral bell of Saint Werner's. Beautiful Sara carried the silver ewer in her right hand, while the Rabbi grasped her left, and she felt that his fingers were ice-cold, and that his arm trembled; but still she went on with him in silence, perhaps because she was accustomed to obey blindly and unquestioning—perhaps, too, because her lips were mute with fear and anxiety.

Below Castle Sonneck, opposite Lorch, about the place where the hamlet of Nieder Rheinbach now stands, there rises a cliff which arches out over the Rhine bank. The Rabbi ascended it with his wife, looked around on every side, and gazed on the stars. Trembling and shivering, as with the pain of death, Beautiful Sara looked at his pale face, which seemed spectre-like in the moon-rays, and seemed to express by turns pain, terror, piety, and rage. But when the Rabbi suddenly snatched from her hands the silver ewer and threw it far away into the Rhine, she could no longer endure her agony of uncertainty, and crying out, "*Schadai*, full of mercy!" threw herself at his feet, and conjured him to solve the dark enigma.

Unable at first to speak from excitement, the Rabbi moved his lips without uttering a sound, till at last he cried, "Dost thou see the Angel of Death? There below he sweeps over Bacharach. But we have escaped his sword. Praised be God!" And in a voice still trembling with excitement he told her that while he was happily and comfortably singing the *Agade* he glanced by chance under the table, and saw at his feet the bloody corpse of a little child. "Then I knew," continued the Rabbi, "that our two guests were not of the community of Israel, but of the

assembly of the godless, who had plotted to bring that corpse craftily into the house so as to accuse us of child-murder, and stir up the people to plunder and murder us. Had I given a sign that I saw through that work of darkness I should simply have brought destruction on the instant to me and mine, and only by craft did I preserve our lives. Praised be God! Grieve not, Beautiful Sara. Our relations and friends will also be saved. It was only my blood which the wretches wanted. I have escaped them, and they will be satisfied with my silver and gold. Come with me, Beautiful Sara, to another land. We will leave bad luck behind us, and that it may not follow us I have thrown to it the silver ewer, the last of my possessions, as an offering. The God of our fathers will not forsake us. Come down, thou art weary. There is Dumb William standing by his boat; he will this morning row us up the Rhine."

Speechless, and as if every limb was broken, Beautiful Sara lay in the arms of the Rabbi, who slowly bore her to the bank. There stood William, a deaf and dumb youth, but yet beautiful as a picture, who, to maintain his old foster-mother, who was a neighbour of the Rabbi, was a fisherman, and kept his boat in this place. It seemed as if he had divined the intention of Abraham, and was waiting for him, for on his silent lips there was an expression as of sweet sympathy and pity, and his great blue eyes rested as with deep meaning on Beautiful Sara, while he lifted her carefully into the canoe.

The glance of the silent youth roused Beautiful Sara from her lethargy, and she realised at once that all which her husband had told her was no mere dream, and a stream of bitter tears poured over her cheeks, which were as white as her garment. So she rested in the canoe, a weeping image of white marble, while by her sat her husband and Silent William, who was rowing earnestly.

Whether it was owing to the measured beat of the oars, or the rocking of the boat, or the fresh perfume from the

Rhine banks whereon joy grows, it ever happens that even the most sorrowful being is marvellously calmed when on a night in spring he is lightly borne in a light canoe on the dear, clear Rhine stream. For in truth old, kind-hearted Father Rhine cannot bear that his children shall weep, so, calming their crying, he rocks them on his trusty arm, and tells them his most beautiful stories, and promises them his most golden treasures, perhaps the old, old, long-sunk Nibelungen hoard. Little by little the tears of Beautiful Sara ceased to flow; her worst sorrow seemed to be washed away by the eddying, whispering waves, while the hills about her home bade her the tenderest farewell. Most trustingly of all did the Kedrich, her favourite, give her a farewell greeting; and it seemed as if far up in the strange moonlight, resting on its summit, she saw a lady with outstretched arms, while the daring dwarfs swarmed out of their caverns in the rocks, and a rider came rushing down the rocks in full gallop. And Beautiful Sara felt as if she were a child again, sitting once more in the lap of her aunt from Lorch, who was telling her brave tales of the bold knight who freed the stolen damsel from the dwarfs, and many other true stories of the wonderful Wisperthal "over there," where the birds talk as sensibly as any mortals, and of Gingerbread Land, where good, obedient children go, and of enchanted princesses, singing trees, crystal castles, golden bridges, laughing water-fairies. . . . But all at once among these pleasant tales which began to send forth sounds of music and to gleam with lovely light, Beautiful Sara heard the voice of her father, who scolded the poor aunt for putting such nonsense into the child's head. Then it seemed to her as if they set her on the little stool before her father's velvet-covered chair, who with a soft hand smoothed her long hair, and smiled as if well pleased, and cradled himself comfortably in his full, Sabbath dressing-gown of blue silk. Yes, it must be the Sabbath, for the flowered cover was spread on the table, all the utensils in

the room shone polished like looking-glasses, the white-bearded public messenger sat beside her father, and ate raisins and talked in Hebrew; even little Abraham came in with a very great book, and modestly begged leave of his uncle to expound a portion of the Holy Scripture, that he might prove that he had learned much during the past week, and therefore deserved much praise—and a corresponding quantity of cakes. . . . Then the lad laid the book on the broad arm of the chair, and set forth the history of Jacob and Rachel, and how Jacob lifted up his voice and wept when he first saw his cousin Rachel, how he talked so confidingly with her by the well, how he had to serve seven years for her, and how speedily they passed away, and how he at last married and loved her for ever and ever. . . . Then all at once Beautiful Sara remembered how her father cried with merry voice, "Wilt thou not, like that also, marry thy cousin Sara?" To which little Abraham seriously replied, "That I will, and she shall wait seven years too." These memories stole like twilight shadows through the soul of the young wife, and she saw how she and her little cousin—now so great a man and her husband—played like children together in the leafy tabernacle; how they were delighted with the gay carpets, flowers, mirrors, and gilded apples; how little Abraham petted her more tenderly, till he grew to be little by little larger and less amiable, and at last of full growth and altogether grim. . . . And now she sits in her room alone of a Saturday evening; the moon shines brightly in, and the door flies open, and cousin Abraham, in travelling garb and pale as death, comes in, and grasps her hand and puts a gold ring on her finger, and says solemnly, "I hereby take thee to be my wife, according to the laws of God and of Israel." "But now," he added, with a trembling voice, "now I must go to Spain. Farewell—for seven years thou must wait for me." So he hurried away, and Sara, weeping, told the tale to her father, who roared and raged. "Cut

off thy hair, for now thou art a married woman," and he rode after Abraham to compel him to give her a letter of divorcement; but he was over the hills and far away, and the father returned silently to his house. And when Beautiful Sara helped to draw off his boots, and to soothe him said that Abraham would return in seven years, he cursed and cried, "Seven years shalt thou be a beggar," and so he soon died.

And so old memories swept through her soul like a hurried play of shadows, the images intermixing and blending strangely, while between them went and came unknown bearded faces, and great flowers with marvellous broad spreading foliage. Then the Rhine seemed to murmur the melodies of the *Agade*, and from its waters the pictures, large as life and in strange exaggerated guise, came forth one by one. There was the forefather Abraham painfully and hurriedly breaking the idols, who were hastily running out of his way; Mizri defending himself fiercely against the maddened Moses; Mount Sinai flashing and flaming; King Pharaoh swimming in the Red Sea, holding his zigzagged gold crown tight in his teeth, frogs with men's faces swimming in between, and the waves foaming and roaring, while a dark giant-hand rose threatening from the deep.

That was the Mouse Tower of Bishop Hatto, and the canoe shot through the Binger Eddy. By this Beautiful Sara was somewhat aroused from her dreams, and gazed at the hills on the shore, from whose summits the lights gleamed, and at whose feet the mist shimmering in moon-rays began to rise. Suddenly she seemed to see in it her friends and relations, as they, with corpse-like faces and flowing shrouds, passed in awful procession along the Rhine. . . . All grew dark before her eyes, an icy current ran through her soul, and, as if in sleep, she only heard the Rabbi repeating the night-prayer slowly and painfully, as if at a deathbed, and dreamily she stammered the words,

"Ten thousand to the right, ten thousand to the left, to protect the king from the terrors of the night."

Then all at once the oppressive gloom and grief passed away, the dark curtain was torn from heaven, and there appeared far above the holy city Jerusalem, with its towers and gates; the Temple gleamed in golden splendour, and in its fore-court Sara saw her father in his yellow Sabbath dressing-gown, smiling as if well pleased. All her friends and relations looked out from the round windows of the Temple, merrily greeting her; in the Holy of Holies knelt pious King David, in his purple mantle and golden crown; sweetly rang his song and harp-tones, and smiling happily Beautiful Sara awoke.

II

As Beautiful Sara opened her eyes they were almost dazzled by the rays of the sun. The high towers of a great city rose before her, and Silent William stood with his boat-hook upright in the canoe, and pushed and guided it through the lively crowding of many vessels, gay with pennons and streamers, whose crews either looked leisurely at passers-by or were in groups busied in loading with chests, bales, and casks the lighters which should bear them to the shore, and with it all was a deafening noise, the constant halloh cry of steersmen, the calling of traders from the shore, and the scolding of the custom-house officials who, in their red coats with white maces and white faces, jumped from boat to boat.

"Yes, Beautiful Sara," said the Rabbi, cheerfully smiling to his wife, "this is the famous, free, imperial, and commercial city of Frankfort-on-the-Main, and we are now passing along that river. Do you see those pleasant-looking houses up there, surrounded by green hillocks? That is Sachsenhausen, from which our lame Gumpert brings us the fine myrrhen for the Feast of the Tabernacles. Here

thou see'st the strong Main Bridge, with thirteen arches, over which many men, waggons, and horses safely pass, and in the middle stands a little house of which Aunty Taubchen says that a baptized Jew lives there, who pays every man who brings him a dead rat six farthings, on account of the Jewish community, who are obliged to deliver annually to the State council five thousand rats' tails for tribute."

At the thought of this war, which the Frankfort Jews were obliged to keep up with the rats, Beautiful Sara burst out laughing. The bright sunlight, and the new gay world now before her, had driven all the terrors and horrors of the past night from her soul, and as she was lifted to land from the canoe by Silent William and her husband, she felt inspired as with a sense of joyful safety. But Silent William looked long with his beautiful deep blue eyes into hers, half sadly, half cheerfully, and then with a significant glance at the Rabbi, sprang back into his boat and disappeared.

"Silent William much resembles my brother who died," said Beautiful Sara. "All the angels are alike," answered the Rabbi; and taking his wife by the hand he led her through the dense crowd on the shore, where, as it was the time of the Easter Fair, stood a great number of newly-erected wooden booths. Then passing through the gloomy Main Gate, they found themselves in quite as noisy a multitude. Here in a narrow street one shop stood close by another, every house, as was usual in Frankfort, being specially adapted to trade. There were no windows on the ground floor, but broad open arches, so that the passer-by, looking in, could see at a glance all there was for sale. And how Beautiful Sara was astonished at the mass of magnificent wares, and the splendour, such as she had never seen before! Here stood Venetians, who offered cheaply all the elegancies and luxuries of the East and Italy, and Beautiful Sara seemed as if enchanted by the ornaments and jewels, the gay and varied caps and bodices,

the gold bangles and necklaces, and the whole display of knick-knackery which women look at so lovingly and wear even more endearingly. The richly embroidered stuffs of velvet and silk seemed to speak to Beautiful Sara, and flash and sparkle back strange wonders into her memory, and it really seemed to her as if she were again a little girl, and that Aunty Taubchen had kept her promise and taken her to the Frankfort Fair, and that she now at last stood before the beautiful garments of which she had heard so much. With a secret joy she reflected what she should take back with her to Bacharach, and which of her two little cousins, Flowery and Birdy, would prefer that blue silk girdle, and whether the green stockings would suit little Gottschalk—when all at once it flashed on her, "Ah, Lord! they are all grown up now, and yesterday they were slain!" She shuddered and shrank into herself, and the shadows of the night seemed to settle again in her soul; but the gold-embroidered cloths glittered once more with a thousand roguish eyes, and drove dark thoughts from her mind, and as she looked into her husband's face it was free from clouds, and bore its habitual serious gentleness. "Shut your eyes, Sara!" said the Rabbi, and led his wife away, still onward through the crowd.

What a varied, variegated, struggling multitude! First in it were the tradesmen, who loudly outbid one another in offering bargains, or talked together, summing on their fingers, or, followed by porters bearing high-packed loads, who at a dog-trot led the way to their lodgings. By the faces of others one could see that they came from curiosity. The stout councilman was shown by his scarlet cloak and golden chain, while the black, prosperous swelling waistcoat betrayed the honourable and proud Altburger. The iron-peaked helmet, the yellow leather jerkin, and the rattling spurs, weighing one pound, indicated the heavy cavalryman, or squire. Under many a little black velvet cap, which bowed in a point over the brow, there was a

rosy girl-face, and the young fellows who jumped after it, like hunting-dogs on the scent, showed they were finished dandies by their saucily feathered caps, their rattling peaked shoes, and their silk garments of separate colours, where one side was green and the other red, or the right striped like a rainbow, and the left in harlequin squares of many colours, so that the mad youths looked as if they were split in two. Freeing themselves from the crowd, the Rabbi with his wife directed the way to the Romer. This is the great market-place of the city, surrounded by houses with high gables, and takes its name from one immense building, "The Roman," which was bought by the magistracy and dedicated as the court-house or town-hall. In it the German Emperor was elected, and before it tournaments were often held. King Maximilian, who was passionately fond of such sports, was then in Frankfort, and in his honour the day before there had been great tilting in the Römer ground. Many idle men still stood on or about the scaffolding, which was being removed by carpenters, and told how the Duke of Brunswick and the Margrave of Brandenburg had charged one another amid the sound of drums and of trumpets, and how Lord Walter the Blackguard had knocked the Knight of the Bear so soundly out of his saddle that the splinters of the lances flew high in the air, and the tall blonde King Max, standing upon the balcony among his courtiers, rubbed his hands for joy. The cloths of gold were still to be seen on the balconies and in the Gothic windows of the town-hall. The other houses of the market-place were also still bedecked and adorned with shields, especially the Limburg house, on whose banner was painted a maiden who bore a sparrow-hawk on her hand, while a monkey held out to her a mirror. Many knights and ladies stood on the balcony engaged in gay conversation, while looking at the crowd below, which, in odd groups and as odd attire, shifted here and there. What a multitude of idlers and loiterers crowded together here to gratify

curiosity! There was laughing, grumbling, stealing, naughty pinching, hurrahing, while ever and anon was heard in yelling, braying notes the trumpet of the mountebank quack, who, in a red cloak with his Jack Pudding and monkey, stood on a high stand blowing bravely the horn of his own skill, and sounding the praises of his tinctures and marvellous salves, ere he solemnly regarded the glass of water brought by some old woman, or applied himself to pull a poor peasant's tooth. Two fencing-masters, fluttering about in gay ribbons, brandishing their rapiers, met as if by chance, and had a mock duel, with great apparent anger; but after a long assault-at-arms each declared that the other was invincible, and took up a collection. Then the newly-organised guild of archers marched by with drummers and pipers, and these were followed by the policeman, who carried a red flag, and led a disorderly mob of travelling adventuresses, who came from the woman's house, known as "the Ass," in Würzburg, and were going to Rosendale, where the highly honourable municipal authority had assigned them their quarters for the fair. "Shut your eyes, Sara," said the Rabbi. For indeed the fantastic crowd of very lightly clad girls, among whom were some who were really beautiful, behaved in a most unbecoming manner, baring their bold white breasts, chaffing those who went by with shameless words, and swinging their long travelling staves. And as they came to the gate of Saint Katherine they rode on them as children play at riding horses, and sang in shrill tones the witch-song—

"Where is the goat? the hellish beast;
Where is the goat? Oh bring him quick!
And if there is no goat, at least
We'll ride upon the stick."

This wild sing-song, which rang afar, was lost in the long-drawn solemn tones of a church procession. It was a mournful train of bare-headed and bare-footed monks,

who carried burning wax tapers, banners with pictures of the saints, and great silver crucifixes. Before it ran boys clad in red and white gowns, bearing smoking censers of frankincense. In the midst, under a splendid canopy, were priests in white robes, bedecked with costly lace or in many-coloured stoles, and one of them held in his hand a sun-like golden vessel, which on arriving at a shrine by the market-corner he raised on high, while he half-sang, half-spoke in Latin—when all at once a little bell rang, and all around becoming silent fell on their knees and made the sign of the Cross. "Shut your eyes, Sara!" cried the Rabbi again, and hastily drew her away through a labyrinth of narrow and crooked streets, and at last over the desolate empty place which separated the new Jewish quarter from the rest of the city.

Before that time the Jews dwelt between the Dom or Cathedral and the bank of the Main, that is, from the bridge to the Lumpenbrunnen or Ragfountain, and from the Mehlwage as far as Saint Bartholomew's. But the Catholic priests obtained a Papal bull forbidding the Jews to live so near the high church, for which reason the magistrates assigned them a place on the Wollgraben, where they built their present quarter. This was surrounded with high walls, and had iron chains before the gate to shut them in from the mob. Here they lived, crowded and oppressed, and with far more vivid memories of previous suffering than at present. In 1240 the raging populace had caused an awful "bath of blood" among them, which was remembered as the first Jewish massacre; and in 1349, when the Flagellants, while passing through the town, set fire to it, and accused the Jews of the deed: the latter were nearly all murdered or burned alive in their own houses. This was called the second Jewish massacre. After this the Jews were oftener threatened with similar slaughter, and during the internal dissensions of Frankfort, especially during a dispute of the council with the guilds, the mob often meant

to attack the Jewish quarter. This place had two doors, which on Catholic festivals were closed from without and on Jewish celebrations from within, and before each gate was a watch-house with city soldiers.

As the Rabbi came with his wife to the entrance to the Jewish quarter, the soldiers lay, as one could see through the open windows, on the wooden bench of their guard-room, while out before the door sat the drummer playing small caprices on his great drum. He was a powerfully built, heavy fellow, wearing a jerkin and hose of fiery yellow, greatly puffed out on the arms and thighs, and profusely scattered with small red flowing tufts sewed on, which looked as if innumerable fiery tongues were licking him from head to foot. His breast and back were covered with cushions of black cloth, against which hung his drum; he bore on his head a flat, round black cap, which was matched by his face in roundness and flatness, and which was in keeping with his dress, being also orange-yellow, picked out with black pimples, and contracted into a gaping smile. So the fellow sat and drummed the air of a song which the Flagellants had sung at the Jewish massacre, while he sang, in a rough, beery voice—

"Our dear Lady true
Walked in the morning dew,
Kyrie eleison!"

"Hans, that is a terrible tune," cried a voice from behind the closed gate of the Jewish quarter. "Yes, Hans, and a bad song too—don't suit the drum; don't suit at all—by my soul—not the fair on Easter morning—bad song—dangerous, Jack, Jacky, little drum-Jacky boy—I'm a lonely man—and if thou lovest me, the Star, the tall Star, the tall nose-Star—so stop it!"

These words were forced out in fragments by the unseen speaker, now as in hasty anxiety, anon in a sighing drawl, with a tone which alternated from softness to harsh hoarse-

ness, such as one hears in consumptive people. The drummer was not moved, and continued his song—

"There came a little youth,
His beard had run away, in truth,
Halleluja!"

"Jack," again cried the voice of the invisible speaker, "Jack, I'm a lone man, and it is a dangerous song, and I don't like it; and I have my reasons for it, and if you love me sing something else, and to-morrow we will drink together."

At the word "drink" Jack ceased his drumming and singing, and said in gentler tone, "The devil take the Jews! but thou, dear Nose Star, art my friend, I protect thee; and if we should only drink together often enough I will convert thee. Yea, I will be thy godfather, and when baptised thou wilt be eternally happy; and if thou hast genius and wilt study industriously under me thou mayest even become a drummer. Yes, Nose Star, thou mayest yet become something great. I will drum the whole catechism into thee when we drink to-morrow together; but now open the gate, for here are two strangers who wish to enter."

"Open the gate!" cried Nose Star, and his voice almost deserted him. "That can't be done in such a hurry, my dear Jack; one can't tell—don't know, you know—and I'm a lone man. Veitel Oxhead has the key, and he is sitting now in the corner mumbling his eighteen-prayer, and he must not be interrupted. And Jakel the Fool is here too, but he is busy; I'm a lone man."

"The devil take the Jews!" cried the drummer, and laughing loudly at this, his own and only joke, he trundled himself to the guard-room and laid down on the bench.

While the Rabbi waited with his wife before the great locked gate, there rose from behind it a strangely ringing, nasal, and somewhat mocking slow voice. "Starry—don't

drone and groan so long. Take the keys from Oxheady's coat pockets, or else go stick your nose in the keyhole, and so unlock the gate. The people have been standing and waiting a long time."

"People!" cried the voice of Nose Star, as if frightened. "I thought there was only one; and I beg you, Fool—dear Jakel Fool—look out and see who are there."

A small, well-grated window in the gate opened, and there appeared in it a yellow cap with two horns, and the drolly, wrinkled, and twisted jest-maker's face of Jakel the Fool. At once the window was shut, and he cried angrily, "Open the gate—there is only a man and a woman."

"A man and a wo-man!" groaned Nose Star. "Yes, and when the gate's opened the woman will take her gown off, and become a man; and there'll be two men, and we are only three!"

"Don't be a hare," replied Jakel the Fool. "Pick up your heart and show courage!"

"Courage!" cried Nose Star, with mournful bitterness. "Hare! Hare is a bad comparison. The hare is an unclean beast. Courage! I am not put here to be courageous, but cautious. When too many come I am to call. But I alone cannot keep them back. My arm is weak, I have an issue-sore, and I'm a lone man. Should one shoot me I should be slain. Then that rich man, Mendel Reiss, will sit on the Sabbath at his table, and wipe the raisin-sauce from his mouth, and rub his belly, and perhaps say, "Tall Nose Star was a brave fellow after all; if it had not been for him perhaps they would have burst the gate. He let himself be shot dead for us. He was a brave fellow; pity that he's dead!"

Here the voice became tender and tearful, but all at once it rose to a hasty and almost angry tone. "Courage! and because the rich Mendel Reiss wipes away the raisin-sauce from his mouth, and pats his belly, and calls me a brave fellow, I'm to let myself be shot dead! Courage!

Be brave! Little Strauss was brave, and yesterday went to the Römer to see the tilting, and thought they would not know him because he wore a frock of violet velvet—three florins a yard—with fox-tails all embroidered with gold—quite magnificent; and they dusted his violet frock for him till it lost its colour, and his own back became violet and did not look human. Courage, indeed! The crooked, crippled Leser was courageous, and called our blackguardly chief magistrate a blackguard, and they hung him up by the feet between two dogs while Jack drummed. Courage! Don't be a hare! Among many dogs the hare is killed. I'm a lone man, and I am really afraid."

"That I'll swear to," cried Jakel.

"Yes; I *have* fear," replied Nose Star, sighing. "I know that it runs in my blood, and I had it from my mother——"

"Ay, ay," interrupted Jakel, "and your mother had it from her father, and he from his, and so all thy ancestors one from the other, back to the forefather who marched with King Saul against the Philistines, and was the first to run away. But look! Oxheady is all ready—he has bowed his head for the fourth time; now he is jumping like a flea at the Holy, Holy, Holy, and seeking cautiously in his pocket."

In fact the keys rattled, the gate grated and creaked as it opened, and the Rabbi and his wife entered the empty Judengasse or Jews' Lane. The man who opened was a little fellow with a good-natured grim face, who nodded absently, like one who did not like to be disturbed in his thoughts, and when he had carefully closed the portal, slipped without saying a word into a corner, murmuring his prayers. Less taciturn was Jakel the Fool, a short fellow with curved legs, a full blooming, red, and laughing face, and an enormous leg-of-mutton hand, which he stretched out of the wide sleeve of his chequered jacket in welcome. Behind him a tall, lean figure showed or rather

hid itself—the slender neck white feathered with a fine cambric ruff, and the thin pale face strangely adorned with an incredibly long nose, which anxiously peered about in every direction.

"God's welcome to a pleasant feast-day!" cried Jakel the Fool. "Do not be astonished that the lane is so empty and silent just now. All our people are in the synagogue, and you are come just in the right time to hear the history of the sacrifice of Isaac. I know it—'tis an interesting tale, and if I had not heard it before, thirty-three times, I would willingly hear it again this year. And—mind you!—'tis an important history, for if Abraham had really killed Isaac and not the goat, then there would have been more goats in the world now—and fewer Jews." And then, with mad and merry grimaces, Jakel began to sing the following song from the *Agade*:—

"A kid, a kid, which my father bought for two pieces of money. A kid! a kid!

"There came a cat which ate the kid, which my father bought for two pieces of money. A kid!

"There came a dog, who bit the cat, who ate the kid, which my father bought for two pieces of money. A kid!

"There came a stick, which beat the dog, who bit the cat, who ate the kid, which my father bought for two pieces of money. A kid! A kid!

"There came a fire, which burnt the stick, which beat the dog, who bit the cat, who ate the kid, which my father bought for two pieces of money. A kid! A kid!

"There came the water, which quenched the fire, which burnt the stick, which beat the dog, who bit the cat, who ate the kid, which my father bought for two pieces of money. A kid! A kid!

"There came an ox, who drank the water, which quenched the fire, which burnt the stick, which beat the dog, who bit the cat, who ate the kid, which my father bought for two pieces of money. A kid! A kid!

"There came the butcher, who slew the ox, who drank the water, which quenched the fire, which burnt the stick, which beat the dog, who bit the cat, that ate the kid, which my father bought for two pieces of money. A kid! A kid!

"Then came the Angel of Death, who slew the butcher, who killed the ox, who drank the water, which quenched the fire, which burnt the stick, which beat the dog, who bit the cat, who ate the kid, which my father bought for two pieces of money. A kid! A kid!"

"Yes, beautiful lady," added the singer, "and the day will come when the Angel of Death will slay the slayer, and all our blood come over Edom, for God is a God of vengeance."

But all at once, casting aside with violent effort the seriousness into which he had unconsciously fallen, Jakel jumped again into his mad fancies, and kept on in his harsh jester tones, "Don't be afraid, beautiful lady, Nose Star will not harm you. He is only dangerous to the old Schnapper Elle. She has fallen in love with his nose—and, faith! it deserves it. Yea, for it is beautiful as the tower which looketh forth towards Damascus, and riseth like a cedar of Lebanon. Outwardly it gleameth like gold leaf and syrup, and inwardly it is all music and loveliness. It bloometh in summer and in winter it is frozen up—but in summer and winter it is petted and pulled by the white hands of Schnapper Elle. Yes, she is madly in love with him. She cuddles him, she fuddles and fodders him; for her age he is young enough. When he is fat enough she means to marry him; and whoever comes to Frankfort, three hundred years hence, will not be able to see the heavens for Nose Stars."

"Ah, you are Jakel the Fool," exclaimed the Rabbi, laughing. "I mark it by your words. I have often heard of you."

"Yes—yes," replied Jäkel, with a comical air of modesty.

"Yes, that comes of being famous. A man is often celebrated far and wide for being a bigger fool than he has any idea of. However, I take great pains and do my very best to be a fool, and jump and shake myself to make the bells ring; other people manage it more easily. But tell me, Rabbi, why do ye journey on a feast-day?"

"My justification," replied the Rabbi, "is in the Talmud, and it says, 'Danger drives away the Sabbath.'"

"Danger!" screamed the tall Nose Star, with an air of deadly terror. "Danger! danger! Drummer Jack!—drum, drum. Danger! danger! Drummer Jack!"

From without resounded the deep beery voice of Drummer Jack, "*Tausend donner sacrament!* The devil take the Jews. That's the third time to-day that you've woke me out of a sound sleep, Nose Star! Don't make me mad! For when I am mad I'm the howling old devil himself; and then as sure as I'm a Christian I'll up with my gun and shoot slap through the grated window of your tower—and then it'll be, old fellow, everybody look out for his nose!"

"Don't shoot! don't shoot! I'm a lonely man," wailed Nose Star piteously, and pressed his face against the wall, and remained trembling and murmuring prayers in this position.

"But say, what has happened?" cried Jäkel the Fool, with all the impatient curiosity which was even then characteristic of the Frankfort Jews.

But the Rabbi impatiently broke loose from them, and went his way along the Jews' Street. "See, Sara!" he exclaimed, "how badly guarded is our Israel. False friends guard its gates without, and within its watchers are folly and fear."

They wandered slowly through the long and empty streets, where only here and there the head of some bright young girl looked out of a window, while the sun mirrored itself in the brilliant panes. In those days the houses in the Jewish quarter were still neat and new, and much lower

than they now are, since it was only at a later time that the Jews, as their number greatly increased, although they could not enlarge their quarter, built one storey over another, squeezed themselves together like sardines, and so cramped themselves both in body and soul. That part of the Jewish quarter which remained after the great fire, and which is called the Old Lane—that series of high, grimly dark houses, where a strangely grimacing, damp race of people bargains and chaffers, is a horrible relic of the Middle Ages. The older synagogue exists no more; it was less capacious than the present one, built later, after the Nuremberger exiles came into the community. It lay more to the north. The Rabbi had no need to ask his way. He found it from afar by the buzz of many voices often raised aloud. In the court of the House of God he parted from his wife, and after washing his hands at the fountain there, entered the lower part of the synagogue where the men pray, while Sara went up a flight of stairs and came into the place reserved for women.

This upper portion was a kind of gallery with three rows of seats painted of a reddish brown, whose backs were fitted in a manner very convenient for placing the prayer-books, with a hanging-board. Here the women sat gossiping together or standing up in deep prayer. However, they often went and peered with curiosity through the large grating which was on the eastern side, through the thin green lattice of which one could look down into the lower portion of the synagogue. There, behind high praying-desks, stood the men in their black cloaks, their pointed beards shooting out over white ruffs, and their skull-capped heads more or less concealed by a four-cornered scarf of white wool or silk, furnished with the prescribed tassels, in some instances also adorned with gold lace. The walls of the synagogue were simply white-washed, and no other ornament was to be seen except the gilded iron grating on the square stage, where the extracts from the Law were

recited, and the holy coffer, a costly embossed chest, apparently upheld by marble columns with rich capitols, whose flower and leaf-work flourished charmingly, covered with a curtain of violet velvet, on which a pious inscription was worked in gold spangles, pearls, and many-coloured gems. Here hung the silver memorial-lamp, and there also rose a barred dais, on whose crossed iron bars were all kinds of sacred utensils, among the rest the seven-branched candlestick; while before it, his countenance towards the chest, stood the choir-leader or chief singer, whose song was accompanied as if instrumentally by the voices of his two assistants, the bass and soprano. The Jews have forbidden all instrumental music to be used in their Church, thinking that hymns to God are more true in spirit or edifying when they rise from the glowing breast of man, than from the cold pipes of an organ. Beautiful Sara was charmed like any child when the chief singer, an admirable tenor, raised his voice, and the ancient, deep, and solemn melodies which she knew so well bloomed forth in a fresher loveliness than she had ever dreamed of, while the bass murmured in harmony the deep dark notes, while in the pauses the soprano trilled sweetly and daintily. Such singing Beautiful Sara had never heard in the synagogue of Bacharach, where the public superintendent, David Levi, was the leader; and when this elderly trembling man, with his broken baa-ing voice, would try to trill like a girl, and in his desperate effort to do so shook his weak and drooping arm feverishly, it rather inspired laughter than devotion.

A something of devotedness, not unmingled with feminine curiosity, drew Beautiful Sara to the grating, where she could look down into the lower division, or the so-called men's school. She had never before seen so many of her faith together, and it cheered her heart to be in such a multitude of those so nearly allied by race, thought, and sufferings. And her soul was still more deeply moved when three old men reverentially approached the sacred

repository, unlocked the chest, drew aside the glittering curtain, and very carefully brought forth the Book which God once wrote with His own hand, and to maintain which the Jews have suffered so much—so much misery and hate, disgrace and death—a thousand years' martyrdom. This Book—a great roll of parchment—was wrapped like a princely child in a gaily embroidered scarlet velvet cloak; above, on both the wooden rollers, were two little silver shrines, in which many pomegranates and small bells moved and rang prettily, while before, on a silver chain, hung gold shields with many coloured gems. The chief singer took the Book, and, as if it had been really a child—a child for whom one has greatly suffered, and whom we love all the more on that account—he rocked it in his arms, skipped with it here and there, pressed it to his breast, and, like one inspired by a holy touch, broke forth into such a devout hymn of praise and thanksgiving that it seemed to Beautiful Sara as if the pillars of the holy shrine began to bloom, and the strange and lovely blossoms and leaves of the capitols shot ever higher, and the notes of the treble were changed to nightingales, while the arch of the synagogue was shattered by the tremendous tones of the bass singer, and the joy and splendour of God gleamed down and through from the blue heavens. Yes, it was a beautiful psalm. The congregation sang over as in chorus the concluding verse, and the chief singer walked slowly to the raised platform in the middle of the synagogue bearing the holy Book, while men and boys crowded hastily about him to kiss its velvet covering or even to touch it. When on the platform, the velvet cover as well as the wrappings covered with illuminated letters were removed, and the chief singer, in the peculiar intonation which in the Passover service is still more peculiarly sounded, read the edifying narrative of the temptation of Abraham.

Beautiful Sara had modestly withdrawn from the grating, and a stout, much ornamented woman of middle age,

with a self-asserting, forward, good-natured aspect, had with a nod allowed her to read in company in her prayer-book. This lady was evidently no great scholar, for as she read with a murmuring voice the prayers as the women do, not being allowed to take part in the singing, Sara observed that she made the best she could of many words, and omitted not a few good passages altogether. But after a while the watery blue eyes of the good woman were languidly raised, an insipid smile gleamed over her red and white china-ware face, and in a voice which she strove to make as genteel as possible, she said to Beautiful Sara, "He sings very well. But I have heard far better singing in Holland. You are a stranger, and perhaps do not know that the chief singer is from Worms, and that they will keep him here if he will be content with four hundred florins a year. He is a charming man, and his hands are as white as alabaster. I think a great deal of a handsome hand; it makes one altogether handsome"—saying which, the good lady laid her own hand, which was really a fine one, on the shelf before her, and with a polite bow which intimated that she did not care to be interrupted while speaking, she added, "The little singer is a mere child, and looks very much worn out. The basso is too ugly for anything, and our Star once said—it was very witty of him—'The bass singer is a bigger fool than even a basso is expected to be!' All three eat in my restaurant—perhaps you don't know that I'm Schnapper Elle?"

Beautiful Sara expressed her thanks for the information, when Schnapper Elle proceeded to narrate in detail how she had once been in Amsterdam, how she had been subjected to base designs on account of her remarkable beauty, how she had come to Frankfort three days before Pentecost and married Schnapper, how he had passed away, and what touching things he had said on his deathbed, and how hard it was to carry on the business of a cook-shop and keep one's hands nice. Several times she glanced aside

with contemptuous looks, apparently directed at some giggling girls, who were apparently quizzing her clothes. Truly this dress was remarkable enough—a very much puffed gown of white satin, on which all the animals of Noah's Ark were embroidered in gaudy colours; a jacket of cloth of gold like a cuirass, the sleeves of red velvet, yellow slashed; an immensely high cap on her head, with a mighty ruff of stiff white linen round her neck, which also bore a silver chain, to which hung all kinds of coins, cameos, and curiosities, chief among which was a great image of the city of Amsterdam, which rested on her bosom.

But the dresses of the other women were not less remarkable. They consisted of a medley of fashions of different ages, and many a little woman there was so covered with gold and diamonds as to look like a wandering jeweller's shop. It is true that there was a fashion of dress prescribed by law to the Frankfort Jews, and to distinguish them from Christians the men must wear yellow rings on their cloaks, while the women wore very high standing, blue striped veils on their caps. However, in the Jewish quarter these laws were little looked after, and there, especially on Sundays, and in the synagogue, the women put on as much magnificent apparel as they could—partly to be envied of others, and partly to advertise the wealth and standing of their husbands.

Meanwhile, as passages from the laws of Moses were being read from the Book of Moses, the devotion somewhat lulled. Many made themselves comfortable and sat down, whispering perhaps business affairs with a friend, or went out into the court to get a little fresh air. Small boys took the liberty of visiting their mothers in the women's apartment; and here worship was still more loosely observed, as there was gossiping, cluttering together or laughing, while, as will always happen, the young quizzed the elder, while the latter blamed the light-headedness of the girls and the

general degeneracy of the age. And just as there was a chief singer in the place below, so was there a head-cackler and gossip in the one above. This was Puppy Reiss, a shallow, buxom woman, who had an inkling of every trouble, and always had a scandal on her tongue. The usual butt of her pointed sayings was the poor Schnapper Elle, and she could mock right well the affected genteel airs and languishing manner with which the latter accepted the mocking compliments of young men.

"Do you know," cried Puppy Reiss, "that Schnapper Elle said yesterday, 'If I were not beautiful and clever, and beloved, I had rather not live.'"

Then there was a loud tittering, and Schnapper Elle, who was not far distant, noting that this was all at her expense, lifted her nose in scorn, and sailed away like a proud galley to some further place. Then Birdie Ochs, a plump and somewhat awkward lady, remarked compassionately that Schnapper Elle might be a little vain and small of mind, but that she was an honest, generous soul, and did much good to many folk in need.

"Particularly to Nose Star," snapped Puppy Reiss. And all who knew of this tender tie laughed all the louder.

"Don't you know," added Puppy spitefully, "that Nose Star now sleeps in Schnapper Elle's house! But just look at Susy Flörsheim down there, wearing the necklace which Daniel Flasch pawned to her husband! Flasch's wife is vexed at it—*that* is plain. And now she is talking to Mrs. Florsheim. *How* amiably they shake hands!—and hate one another like Midian and Moab! How sweetly they smile on one another! Oh, you dear souls, *don't* eat one another up out of pure tenderness! I'll just steal up and listen to them!"

And so, like a sneaking wild cat, Puppy Reiss stole along and heard the two women mutually bewailing to one another how they had worked all the past week to clean up the house and scour the kitchen things, and all they had

to do before Passover, so that not a crumb of leavened bread stuck to anything. And such troubles as they had baking the unleavened bread! Mrs. Flasch had bitter griefs over this—for she had no end of trouble over it in the public bakery, for according to the ticket which she drew she could not bake there till the afternoon of the very last day, just before Passover Eve; and then old Hannah had kneaded the dough badly, and the maids had rolled it too thin, and half of it was scorched in baking, and worst of all, rain came pouring through the bake-house roof, and so wet and weary they had to work till late in the night.

"And, my dear Mrs. Florsheim," said Mrs. Flasch, with gracious friendliness most insincere, "you were a little to blame for that, because you did not send your people to help me in baking."

"Ah! pardon," replied the other. "My servants were so busy—the goods for the fair had to be packed—my husband——"

"Yes. I know," said Mrs. Flasch, with cutting irony in her speech. "I know that you have much to do—many pledges and a good business, and necklaces——"

And a bitter word was just about to glide from the lips of the speaker, and Dame Florsheim had turned as red as a lobster, when Puppy Reiss cried out loudly, "For God's sake!—the strange lady lies dying—water! water!"

Beautiful Sara lay insensible, pale as death, while a swarm of women, busy and bewailing, crowded round her. One held her head, another her arm, some old women sprinkled her with the glasses of water which hung behind their prayer-desks for washing the hands in case they should by accident touch their own bodies. Others held under her nose an old lemon stuck full of spices, which remained from the last feast-day, when it had served for smelling and strengthening the nerves. Exhausted and sighing deeply, Beautiful Sara at last opened her eyes, and with mute

glances thanked them for their kind care. But now the eighteenth prayer, which no one dare neglect, was heard in thrilling sound below, and the busy women hurried back to their places and offered the prayer as the rite ordains, standing up with their faces turned towards the east, which is that part of the heavens where Jerusalem lies. Birdie Ochs, Schnapper Elle, and Puppy Reiss stayed to the last by Beautiful Sara—the first two to aid her as much as possible, the latter to find out why it was that she fainted so suddenly.

Beautiful Sara had swooned from a singular cause. It is a custom in the synagogue that any one who has escaped a great danger shall, after the reading of the extracts from the Law, appear in public and return thanks for his Divine deliverance. As Rabbi Abraham rose in the multitude to make his prayer, and Beautiful Sara recognised her husband's voice, she also observed how its accents gradually subsided into the mournful murmur of the prayer for the dead. She heard the names of her dear ones and relations, accompanied by the words which convey the blessing on the departed; and the last hope vanished from her soul, for it was torn by the certainty that those dear ones had really been slain, that her little niece was dead, that her little cousins with flowers and birds were dead, that little Gottschalk was dead too. All murdered and dead. And she too would have died from the agony of this conviction, had not a kind swoon poured forgetfulness over her soul.

III

When Beautiful Sara, after divine service was ended, went down into the courtyard of the synagogue, the Rabbi stood there waiting for her. He nodded to her with a cheerful expression, and accompanied her out into the street, where there was no longer silence but a noisy multitude. It was like a stream of ants, what with bearded men

in black coats, women gleaming along like gold-chafers, boys in new clothes carrying prayer-books after their parents, young girls who, because they could not enter the synagogue, now came bounding to their parents, bowing their curly heads to receive their blessings—all gay and merry, and walking about with the happy anticipations of people expecting a good dinner, the exquisite scent of which—causing the mouth to water—rose from many black pots and covers carried by smiling girls from the great public bakery.

In this multitude there was specially to be remarked the form of a Spanish cavalier, whose youthful features bore that fascinating pallor which ladies generally associate with an unfortunate—and men, on the contrary, with a very fortunate—love affair. His gait, naturally careless, had however in it a somewhat affected mincing daintiness; the feathers of his cap were more agitated by the aristocratic waving of his head than by the wind; and his golden spurs, and the jewelled guard of his sword, which he bore on his arm, rattled rather more than was needed. A white cavalier's cloak enveloped his slender limbs in an apparently careless manner, which, however, betrayed the most careful arrangement of the folds. Passing and repassing, partly with curiosity, partly with an air of a connoisseur, he approached the women walking by, looked calmly at them, paused when he thought a face was worth the trouble, gave to many a pretty girl a passing compliment, and went his way heedless as to its effect. He had met Beautiful Sara more than once, but seemed to be repelled every time by her commanding look, or the enigmatical smiling air of her husband, but at last, proudly subduing all diffidence, he boldly faced both, and with foppish confidence made in a tenderly gallant tone the following speech:—

"I swear, Senora!—list to me!—I swear—by the roses of both the kingdoms of Castile, by the Aragonese hyacinths and the pomegranate blossoms of Andalusia! by the sun

which illumines all Spain, with all its flowers, onions, pea-soups, forests, mountains, mules, he-goats, and Old Christians! by the canopy of heaven, of which this sun is the golden tassel! and by the God who sits on the roof of heaven and meditates day and night over the creation of new forms of lovely women!—I swear that you, Senora, are the fairest dame whom I have seen in all the German realm, and if you please to accept my service, then I pray of you the favour, grace, and leave to call myself your knight and bear your colours henceforth in jest or earnest!"

A flush as of pain rose in the face of Beautiful Sara, and with one of those glances which are the most cutting from the gentlest eyes, and with a tone such as is bitterest from a beautiful voice, the lady answered as one deeply hurt:—

"My noble lord, if you will be my knight you must fight whole races, and in the battle there will be little thanks to win and less honour; and if you will wear my colours, then you must sew yellow rings on your cloak, or bind you with a blue-striped scarf, for such are my colours—the colours of my house, the House of Israel, which is wretched indeed, one mocked in the streets by the sons of good fortune."

A sudden purple red shot into the cheeks of the Spaniard; an inexpressible confusion seemed to seize him as he stammered:—

"Senora, you misunderstood me. An innocent jest—but, by God, no mockery, no jest at Israel. I myself am sprung from that house; my grandfather was a Jew, perhaps even my father."

"And it is very certain, Senor, that your uncle is one," suddenly exclaimed the Rabbi, who had calmly witnessed this scene; and with a merry quizzical glance he added, "And I myself will be bound that Don Isaac Abarbanel, nephew of the great Rabbi, is sprung from the best blood of Israel, if not from the royal race of David!"

The chain of the sword rattled under the Spaniard's cloak, his cheeks became deadly white, his upper lip twitched as with scorn in which there was pain, and angry death grinned in his eyes as in an utterly changed, ice-cold, keen voice he said:—

"Senor Rabbi, you know me. Well, then, you know also who I am. And if the fox knows that I belong to the blood of the lion, let him beware and not bring his fox-beard into danger of death, nor provoke my anger. Only he who feels like the lion can understand his weakness."

"Oh, I understand it well," answered the Rabbi, and a mournful seriousness came over his brow. "I understand it well, how the proud lion, out of pride, casts aside his princely hide and goes mumming in the scaly armour of a crocodile, because it is the fashion to be a grinning, cunning, greedy crocodile! What can you expect the lesser beasts to be when the lion denies his nature? But beware, Don Isaac, *thou* wert not made for the element of the crocodile. For water—thou knowest well what I mean—is thy evil fortune, and thou wilt perish. Water is not thy element; the weakest trout can live in it better than the king of the forest. Hast thou forgotten how the eddy of the Tagus would swallow thee?"

Bursting into loud laughter, Don Isaac suddenly threw his arms round the Rabbi's neck, covered his mouth with kisses, leapt with jingling spurs high into the air, so that the Jews who were passing by shrank back in alarm, and in his own natural hearty and joyous voice cried:—

"Truly thou art Abraham of Bacharach! And it was a good joke, and more than that, a friendly act, when thou—in Toledo—didst leap from the Alcantara bridge into the water, and grasp by the hair thy friend, who could drink better than he could swim, and drew him to dry land. I was very near making really deep research whether there is actually gold in the sands of the Tagus, and whether the Romans were right in calling it the golden river. I

assure you that I shiver even now from only thinking of that water-party."

Saying this the Spaniard made a gesture as if he were shaking water from his garments. The countenance of the Rabbi expressed great joy as he again and again pressed his friend's hand, saying every time:—

"I am indeed glad."

"And so indeed am I," answered the other. "It is seven years now since we met, and when we parted I was as yet only a little greenhorn, and thou—thou wert already so staid and serious. But whatever became of the beautiful Donna who in those days cost thee so many sighs, which thou didst accompany with the lute?"

"Hush, hush! the Donna hears us—she is my wife, and thou hast thyself given her to-day a proof of thy taste and poetic skill."

It was not without some trace of his former embarrassment that the Spaniard greeted the beautiful lady, who amiably regretted that she, by expressing herself so plainly, had pained a friend of her husband.

"Ah, Senora," replied Don Isaac, "he who grasps too snappishly at a rose must not complain that the thorns scratch. When the star of evening mirrors itself, gold-gleaming, in the azure flood——"

"For God's sake!" interrupted the Rabbi, "cease! If we wait till the star of evening mirrors itself, gold-gleaming in the azure flood, my wife will starve, for she has eaten nothing since yesterday, and suffered much meantime."

"Well, then, I will take you to the best cookshop of Israel," said Don Isaac, "to the house of my friend Schnapper Elle, which is not far away. I already smell the sweet perfume of the kitchen! Oh, didst thou but know, O Abraham, how this perfume woos and wins me. This it is which, since I have dwelt in this city, has so often lured me to the tents of Jacob. Intimacy with God's

peculiar people is not a weakness of mine, and truly it is not to pray but to eat that I visit the Jews' Street."

"Thou hast never loved us, Don Isaac."

"Well," continued the Spaniard, "I like your cookery much better than your creed—which wants the right sauce. I really never could rightly digest you. Even in your best days, under the rule of my ancestor David, who was king over Judah and Israel, I never could have held out, and certainly I should some fine morning have run away from Mount Zion and emigrated to Phœnicia or Babylon, where the joys of life foamed in the temple of the gods."

"Thou blasphemest, Isaac, blasphemest the one God," murmured the Rabbi grimly. "Thou art much worse than a Christian—thou art a heathen, a servant of idols."

"Yes, I am a heathen, and the melancholy self-tormenting Nazarenes are quite as little to my taste as the dry and joyless Hebrews. May our dear Lady of Sidon, holy Astarte, forgive me, that I kneel before the many sorrowed Mother of the Crucified and pray. Only my knee and my tongue worship death—my heart remains true to life."

"But do not look so sourly," continued the Spaniard, as he saw how little gratification his speech seemed to give the Rabbi. "Do not look at me with disdain. My nose is not a renegade. When I once by chance came at dinner-time into this street, and the well-known savoury odours of the Jewish kitchen rose to my nose, I was seized by the same yearning which our fathers felt for the fleshpots of Egypt—pleasant tasting memories of youth came unto me. I saw again in spirit the carp with brown raisin sauce which my aunt prepared so sustainingly for Friday eve—I saw once more the steamed mutton with garlic and horse-radish which might raise the dead, and the soup with dreamily swimming force-meat balls—the Klosschen—and my soul melted like the notes of an enamoured nightingale—and since then I eat in the cookshop of my friend Donna Schnapper Elle."

Meanwhile they had arrived at the place so highly praised, where Schnapper Elle stood at the door greeting in a friendly manner the strangers come to the fair, who, led by hunger, streamed in. Behind, and putting forth his head over her shoulder, was the tall Nose Star, anxiously and inquisitively observing them. Don Isaac approached the landlady with exaggerated grand style, who returned his satirically deep reverences with endless curtseys, after which he drew the glove from his right hand, wound it about with the fold of his cloak, and grasping that of Schnapper Elle, drew it over his moustaches and said:—

"Senora! your eyes rival the glow of the sun! But as eggs the longer they are boiled the harder they become, so on the contrary my heart grows softer the longer it is cooked in the flaming flashes of your eyes. From the yolk of my heart flies up the winged god Amor and seeks a confiding nest in your bosom. And oh, Senora, wherewith shall I compare that bosom? For in all the world there is no flower, no fruit, which is like to it! This growth is only of its kind alone! Though the storm wind tears away the leaves from the tenderest rose, your bosom is still a winter rose which defies all storms. Though the sour lemon the older it grows becomes yellower and more wrinkled, your bosom rivals in colour and softness the sweetest pineapple. Oh, Senora, if the city of Amsterdam be as beautiful as you told me yesterday, and the day before, and every day, yet is the ground on which it rests far lovelier still."

The cavalier spoke these last words with affected earnestness, and squinted as if yearning at the great picture-plate which hung from Schnapper Elle's neck. Nose Star looked down with inquisitive eyes, and the much-bepraised bosom heaved so that the whole city of Amsterdam rocked from side to side.

"Ah!" sighed Schnapper Elle, "virtue is worth more than beauty What use is my beauty to me? My youth

is passing away, and since Schnapper is gone—anyhow, he had handsome hands—what avails beauty."

With that she sighed again, and like an echo all but inaudible Nose Star sighed behind her.

"Of what avail is your beauty?" cried Don Isaac. "Oh, Donna Schnapper Elle, do not sin against the goodness of creative Nature! Do not scorn your most charming gifts. She will terribly revenge herself. Those blessed blessing eyes will be like dim glasses, those winsome lips grow flat and commonplace, that chaste and charming form be changed into a barrel of tallow hardly pleasing to any one, and the city of Amsterdam at last rest on a spongy bog."

So he sketched piece by piece the appearance of Schnapper Elle, so that the poor woman was bewildered, and sought to escape the uncanny compliments of the cavalier. She was delighted at this instant to see Beautiful Sara appear, as it gave her an opportunity to inquire whether she had quite recovered from her swoon. Thereupon she rushed into lively chatter, in which she fully developed her sham gentility, mingled with real kindness of heart, and related with much more sensibility than common sense the awful story how she herself had almost fainted with horror when she, as innocent and inexperienced as could be, came in a canal boat to Amsterdam, and the rascally porter who carried her trunk led her—not to a respectable tavern, but oh, horrors!—to an infamous place! She saw what it was the moment she entered, by the brandy-drinking; and, oh! —the immorality that was going on!—and she would, as she said, "really have swooned, if it had not been that during the six weeks she stayed there she only once ventured to close her eyes."

"I dared not," she added, "on account of my virtue. And all that took place because of my beauty! But virtue will stay—when good looks pass away."

Don Isaac was beginning to go somewhat critically into

the details of this story when, fortunately, Squinting Aaron Hirschkuh from Hamburg on the Lahn came, a white apron on his arm, and bitterly bewailed that the soup was already served, and that the boarders were seated at table, but that the landlady was missing.

(The conclusion and the chapters which follow are lost, not from any fault of the author.)

HEINRICH HEINE

(1800–1856)

***

II

FROM THE MEMOIRS OF HERR VON SCHNABELEWOPSKI

(Translated by S L Fleishman)

My mother herself packed my trunk; with every shirt she also packed some good advice. In later times the laundress exchanged all these shirts, together with the good advice. My father was deeply moved, and gave me a long list of rules how to demean myself in every possible contingency that might occur in my life. The first rule was, to turn each ducat ten times before spending it. At first I did so; but I soon found the everlasting turning too tedious. With rules, my father also gave me the ducats necessary for the turning process. . . .

My first destination was Hamburg, where I was to study theology, in conformity with the wishes of my parents; but

I must confess that during my stay I occupied myself more with worldly than with divine matters. . . .

The city of Hamburg is one of the old free cities of Germany; and in fact one finds there a remarkable degree of freedom. The citizens do what they please, and the wise and august senate does what it pleases. The customs of Hamburg are English, and its eating is heavenly. In truth dishes are to be found there not dreamt of in our philosophies. . . .

Concerning religion, politics, and science, the people of Hamburg differ, but in regard to gastronomy the most beautiful harmony prevails. Let the Christian theologians bicker as they see fit over the import of the sacramental Supper; as regards what suppers in general ought to be they are a unit. Let there be among the Jews one party that will have grace said in German, and another faction that insists on chanting the grace in Hebrew; both parties eat, yea, and partake of excellent fare, and are judges of good eating. The military, I have no doubt, are quite Spartan in their heroism, but of Spartan black broth they desire to know nothing.

The physicians, who are so discordant among themselves as to the treatment of diseases, and who, if allopaths, prescribe smoked beef for the national ailment, dyspepsia, and, if homœopaths, one-ten-thousandth of a drop of absinthe dissolved in a large bowl of turtle-soup—all agree in regard to the flavour of the smoked beef and the seasoning of the turtle-soup.

Hamburg is, in sooth, the native city of smoked beef, and is prouder of it than Mayence is of her Johann Faust, or Eisleben of her Luther; for what are printing and the Reformation in comparison with smoked beef? Whether the two first have been a blessing or an evil, is still a matter of dispute between two parties in Germany; but even our most zealous Jesuits admit that smoked beef is a beneficial invention. . . .

Among the remarkable places of the city is the theatre, which merits special mention. Its actors are good, orderly citizens—respectable *patres-familiares*—who know nothing of dissembling and dissimulation, and who deceive no one. They are pious men, who convert the theatre into a house of God, by convincing the sceptic who has lost faith in mankind that there is at least one spot free from hypocrisy and deceit. . . .

For the benefit of such readers as are not familiar with the localities of Hamburg—and perhaps there are such in China or Upper Bavaria—I would remark that one of the most popular promenades of the sons and daughters of Hammonia is the beautiful and appropriately named Maiden Lane. Here, fronting on a lakelet, and under the shade of linden trees are cosy arbours, in which it is pleasant to sit of a summer's afternoon when the sun shines not too fiercely, but smiles genially down upon the linden trees, and the houses, and the people, and the swans floating upon the silver bosom of the lakelet, until it almost seems like a scene from fairy-land. There I sat during many a pleasant afternoon, thinking of—what a young man generally does think of, which is nothing; watching—what a young man generally does watch, which is the young misses promenading to and fro. Ah! those were the halcyon days when Dame Fortune smiled upon me; and Dame Fortune's name was then Héloise. And Héloise smiled on me often, for she had beautiful teeth.

She was a sweet, pretty, bewitching little Dame Fortune, with rosy cheeks, a delicately-formed nose, skin white as a lily, eyes blue as a mountain lake. . . .

Methinks, I still see her cherry-coloured striped dress, which cost me four marks and three shillings per yard, and Herr Seligmann warranted the stripes to be fast colours.

If, gentle reader, I have led you into so-called "bad company," console yourself with the reflection that it has not cost you so much as it did me. . . .

Often thus, lost in pleasant, idle reveries, I sat contemplating the lasses, and the clear, serene skies, and St. Peter's tower, with its slender steeple, and the quiet blue Alster, on which the swans were sailing in stately, graceful, and composed motion. Oh, the swans! I could watch them for hours—those lovely creatures, with their long, beautiful necks, voluptuously rocking themselves on the limpid waves, at intervals joyously diving out of sight, then reappearing, arrogantly splashing about in the water, until the skies darkened, and the stars came forth—longing, consoling, marvellously tender, transfigured. The stars! Are they golden flowers decking the bridal bosom of the sky? or are they the amorous glances of angels' eyes, that yearningly mirror themselves in the waters of the earth, and coquette with the swans?

Ah! that was long, long ago. Then, I was young and foolish; now, I am old and foolish. Since then, many a flower has faded and some even have been crushed. Many a silken robe has since been torn into tatters; and even Herr Seligmann's cherry-striped chintz has lost its colour. And as for Héloise herself, when next I met her she looked like Solomon's Temple after it had been razed by Nebuchadnezzar.

And the city itself, how changed! And Maiden Lane! Snow lay on all the roofs, and it seemed as if the houses had likewise whitened with age. The lindens were dead trees, whose barren boughs swayed like sceptres in the cold wind. The sky was of an ashy blue, and darkened rapidly. . . .

But more dismal, more mysterious than these sights were the sounds that pierced my ears from another quarter. They were hoarse, snarling, metallic tones—a frantic screeching, a frightened, splashing, and despairing struggling, a gasping and wheezing, a gurgling and groaning, an indescribable blood-curdling shriek of pain and terror. The basin of the Alster was frozen over. A large broad quadrangle

had been cut into the ice, and the horrible cries that I had just heard came from the throats of the poor white creatures that were swimming around therein, uttering those terrible shrieks of death-agony; and, alas! they were the same swans that had once so tenderly and merrily moved my soul. Alas for the beautiful white swans! Their wings had been broken, so that they could not in the autumn emigrate to the warm South. And now the North held them spell-bound in its dark ice-pits, and the keeper of the pavilion opined that they were quite comfortable therein, and that the cold was healthy for them. But that is not true: one is not comfortable when helplessly imprisoned, almost frozen in a cold pool, and one's wings broken, so that it is impossible to fly to the beautiful South, where dwell the loveliest flowers, and where the sun shines brightly over the blue mountain-lakes. Alas! once I fared not much better, and hence I understood the tortures of these poor swans, and as it darkened more and more, and the luminous stars came forth—the same stars that once in lovely summer nights so lovingly caressed the swans,' but now looked down upon them, cold as winter, frostily clear, almost mockingly,—well did I now comprehend that the stars are no loving sympathetic being, but only glittering illusions of night, eternal phantoms in an imaginary sky, golden lies on a dark-blue nothing. . . .

It was on a most lovely spring day that I left Hamburg. Still can I see the golden sunlight playing over the ships in the harbour; still do I hear the merry, long-drawn-out chant, "Hoi-ho!" of the sailors. Such a harbour in spring-time has a most pleasing resemblance to the temperament of one who in the first flush of youth goes into the busy world and for the first time ventures upon the broad ocean of life. As yet his thoughts stream like variegated pennons; enthusiasm swells the sails of his wishes—Hoi-ho! But soon storms arise, the horizon darkens, the winds howl, the planks creak, the billows break the rudder, and the poor ship is

dashed to pieces on some romantic crag, or strands on some shallow prosaic sand-bar, or perhaps, worm-eaten and shattered, with drooping masts, without a single anchor of hope, it reaches again the old harbour, and there, piteously dismantled, grows rotten with age, a miserable wreck.

But here are, too, men who are not to be compared to ordinary vessels, but who rather resemble steamers. They carry in their breasts a dark, smouldering fire, and they sail against wind and weather. Their smoke banners flutter like the black plumes of a rider by night; the side-wheels of the steamer are like colossal spurs, which they strike into the wave-ribe of the ocean, and the rebellious, foaming element must obey their will, like a steed its rider; but often the boiler bursts, and then the internal flame consumes it. . . .

At Leyden I found the eating miserably poor. The republic of Hamburg had spoiled me. I cannot here omit an additional tribute of Hamburg's kitchen. Oh, ye gods! how did I the first four weeks yearn for the smoked beef and mock-turtle of Hammonia! I languished in heart and stomach, and, had not my landlady of "The Red Cow" fallen in love with me, I must have perished from longing.

Hail to thee, landlady of "The Red Cow"! She was a plump little woman, with a remarkably corpulent body, and a remarkably small, round head, red cheeks, blue eyes —roses and violets. For hours we sat together in the garden, drinking tea out of genuine Chinese porcelain cups. It was a pretty garden, laid out in four- and three-cornered beds, around which were symmetrically strewed gold-sand, cinnabar and small white shells. The trunks of the trees were daintily painted red and blue. Then there were copper cages filled with canary-birds, and onion-plants in variegated glazed pots. The garden was also ornamented with little wooden statuettes, representing obelisks, pyramids, vases and animals. My attention was particularly attracted to a green ox, which glared at me quite jealously whenever

I embraced her, the lovely landlady of "The Red Cow."

Hail to thee, landlady of "The Red Cow"! When Myn Frow covered the upper part of her head with plaits, and robed in many-coloured, flowered damask dress, and heavily loaded her arms with white Brabant lace, then she looked for all the world like a fabulous Chinese doll—probably the goddess of porcelain. When then in my rapture I kissed her a loud smack on each cheek, she would stand as still as porcelain, sighing, porcelain-like, "Myn Heer." Then all the tulips of the garden seemed to be moved with sympathy, apparently joining in the sigh, "Myn Heer."

This amour procured me many a choice tit-bit. For every love-scene had an influence on the contents of the victual-basket which the excellent landlady daily sent to my apartment. My mess companions, six other students who dined with me in my room, could always tell from the flavour of the roast veal or beef fillet how much she loved me—Myn Frow, the landlady of "The Red Cow." If once in a while the eatables happened to be of an inferior quality, I had to submit to many humiliating gibes, and it was then: "See how poorly Schnabelewopski looks; how sallow is his complexion, how wrinkled his face, how sunken his eyes. It is no wonder that our landlady has grown tired of him, and now sends us such wretched meals." Or else they would say, "Alas, Schnabelewopski grows weaker and thinner each day, and will perhaps finally lose the favour of our landlady, and then we shall always have poor dinners, like to-day: we must feed him well, so that he may again present a more ardent exterior." And then they would force the most unsavoury morsels into my mouth, compelling me to eat particularly large quantities of celery. But if for several consecutive days the fare was meagre, I was overwhelmed with the most earnest expostulations and entreaties to procure better food, by re-awakening the flames of love in our landlady's breast, to redouble my attentions to her—in brief,

to sacrifice myself for the general good. In long harangues it was then eloquently pictured to me how grand it was to devote one's self heroically to the welfare of one's fellow-citizens, like Regulus, who permitted himself to be put in a cask of sharp nails, or like Theseus, who voluntarily ventured into the cave of the Minotaur; and then Livy and Plutarch were cited, etc. They also sought to spur me into emulation by drawing on the wall pictorial illustrations of those great deeds, and that, too, with grotesque allusions, for the Minotaur resembled the red cow on the well-known inn-sign, and the Carthaginian cask full of nails looked like our landlady herself. In fact, these ungrateful beings constantly made the outward appearance of this excellent woman the butt of their wit. Generally they constructed an effigy of her figure with apples or kneaded it out of bread-crumbs. They took a very small apple to represent the head, placed it on top of a very large apple, which was to represent the body, and the latter was again supported by two tooth-picks, for legs.

When the roast was particularly bad, we would argue concerning the existence of God. The Lord had, however, always a majority. Only three of our mess were atheistically inclined; and even they would allow themselves to be convinced if we had good cheese for dessert. The most zealous deist was little Simson, who, when he debated with tall Vanpitter, became occasionally quite violent, and paced the room excitedly, saying, "By God, that is beyond endurance!"

Vanpitter, a tall lank Frieslander, whose temperament was as phlegmatic as the waters in a Dutch canal, drew his arguments from German philosophy, which at that time was all the fashion in Leyden. He ridiculed the narrow minds that attributed to God a separate being, as a something apart from the universe; he even accused them of blasphemy in endowing God with wisdom, justice, love, and similar human qualities, which are not at all appropriate for Him, for these qualities are merely the negation of corresponding

human weaknesses. But when Vanpitter had unfolded his own pantheistic views, a certain Dricksen from Utrecht, a fat disciple of Fichte, took the field against him, and satirised keenly this vague, pantheistic deity. He went so far as to assert, that it was blasphemy even to speak of the existence of God, inasmuch as existence supposes space, or, in short, matter. Yea, it would be blasphemous to say of God, "He is," for the most spiritual being cannot be conceived except through material limitations. To conceive the idea of God, one must abstract from it everything material, and think of Him, not as a form of space, but as the order of events.

These words would always set little Simson raging, and he would pace the room more excitedly than before, crying, in still louder tones, "Oh, God! By God! This is too much!" I believe he would have beaten the fat Fichtean for the honour of God, had he not been too small and weak. Sometimes he did even spring at him; but the fat one, without once removing his pipe from his mouth, quickly grasped little Simson's puny arms, held them firmly, very composedly explained to him the Fichtean system, and finally blew into his face his thick tobacco-smoke together with his flimsy arguments, so that little Simson, almost choked with smoke and rage, could only whimper beseechingly, scarce audibly, "Oh, God! Oh, God!" But He never assisted little Simson, although he bravely fought His battles.

But, notwithstanding the divine indifference, and notwithstanding the almost human ingratitude of God, little Simson remained the steadfast champion of deism, and that, I believe, from an inborn tendency. For his ancestors belonged to God's chosen people—a people whom God once favoured with an especial affection, and who consequently unto this day cling with a certain attachment to Him. The Jews have always been the Swiss guard of deism. In politics the Jews may be extreme republicans; they may even

draggle in the mire like true sans-culottes; but when religious matters are in question they remain the submissive servants of their Jehovah, the old parvenu, who wishes to know nothing more of the whole pack, and has let Himself be baptised into a pure divine Spirit.

I believe that the pure divine Spirit, this parvenu of heaven, who has now arrived at a state of moral, cosmopolitan, and universal culture, has a secret grudge against the poor Jews, who knew Him in His first crude form, and in their synagogues daily remind Him of His former obscure, merely national rank. Perhaps the Lord dislikes to be reminded of His humble origin in Palestine, and that He was once the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and was formerly called Jehovah. . . .

During my stay in Leyden I spent much time in the society of little Simson. One of his peculiarities was that he could not endure that the least article in his room should be displaced; he became visibly fidgety when one took the veriest trifle in hand, were it only a pair of snuffers. Everything must remain just as it lay, for his furniture and other effects served him as helps, according to the rules of mnemonics, to fix in his memory all sorts of historical dates or philosophical propositions. When once, during his absence, the chambermaid removed an old chest, and took his shirts and stockings from the bureau and sent them to the wash, he was inconsolable on his return, and asserted that now he knew nothing more of Assyrian history, and that all his evidences for the immortality of the soul, which he had so carefully and systematically arranged in the various bureau-drawers, were now in the wash. . . .

The proprietor of my lodging-house was a man of about fifty, with pale, emaciated features, and very small, green eyes, with which he was continually blinking, like a sentinel with the sun shining in his eyes. His wife was a tall, gaunt woman, nothing but skin and bones. He was a cobbler by trade, and a Baptist by faith. He read the Bible diligently.

These readings interwove themselves into his dreams, and at breakfast he would relate to his wife how the most eminent and pious personages of the Bible had honoured him with their conversation, and how all the women of the Old Testament had lavished the most friendly and tender attentions on him. The latter circumstance did not altogether please his wife, and not infrequently did she betray her jealousy of her husband's nightly meetings with the women of the Old Testament. "If," said she, "it were only the chaste Virgin Mary, or old Martha, or even Mary Magdalene, who they say has reformed; but the sottish daughters of Lot, and fine Madam Judith, and the strolling Queen of Sheba—such dubious creatures are not to be tolerated."

But her fury was at its climax when one morning her husband in the garrulousness of his ecstasy, gave an enthusiastic description of the beautiful Esther, who had requested him to assist at her toilet, so that through the power of her charms she might win King Ahasuerus over to the good cause. In vain the poor man assured her that Mordecai himself had introduced him to his lovely foster-daughter, and that the latter's toilet was already nearly complete, and that he had only combed her long raven tresses—in vain. The infuriated woman beat him with his leathern strap, and dashed the hot coffee in his face, and would most assuredly have put an end to him had he not faithfully promised to have nothing more to do with the women of the Old Testament, and in future to converse only with the patriarchs and the male prophets.

The consequence of this maltreatment was that thereafter Myn Heer carefully concealed his dreamy bliss; he became now a pious *roué*. As he himself confessed to me, he had the temerity to dream himself into the harem of King Solomon and to drink tea with his thousand wives. . . .

What is a dream? What is death? Is the latter merely an interruption of life, or is it total extinction? For those who only know a past and a future, and who cannot live an

eternity in every moment of the present—for such, death must be terrible. When the two crutches, Time and Space, slip from their grasp, then they sink into the eternal Nothing.

And dreams? Why do we not fear falling asleep more than being buried? Is it not frightful that during a whole night the body lies stretched dead as a corpse, while the spirit is us lives a most varied life—a life filled with all the terrors of that separation between body and spirit which we ourselves have created? When once in the future both are again united in our consciousness, then perhaps there will be no more dreams, or only invalids, whose harmony has been destroyed, will dream.

The ancients dreamed lightly and but little; a profound, vivid dream was regarded by them as a memorable event, and was recorded in the books of history. Real dreaming begins only with the Jews, a spiritual people, and reaches its full bloom with the Christians, a people of spirits. Our posterity will shudder when once they read what a ghostly existence we have led, and how the human nature in us was divided and only the one half really lived. Our era—and it begins at the cross of Christ—will some time be regarded as humanity's great hypochondriacal period.

And yet what sweet dreams have we not dreamed! Our healthy descendants will scarcely be able to comprehend this. From around us vanished all the splendours of the universe, and we found them again in our inmost consciousness; the fragrance of the crushed rose, and the sweetest songs of the affrighted nightingale have fled for refuge into our souls.

When at night I disrobe, and stretch myself in bed, and cover myself with the white sheet, I sometimes involuntarily shudder, and the thought flashes over me that I am dead, and am burying myself. Then I hastily close my eyes, to escape the horrible thought and to seek refuge in dreamland. . . .

What strange creatures are mankind! how strange their

lives! how tragic their fate! They love one another, and most times they may not say it, and even if they did say it they would seldom understand each other. And yet they do not live for ever; they are mortal, only a short space of time is vouchsafed them in which to seek happiness; they must snatch it quickly, and press it hastily to their hearts ere it flies. Hence are their love songs so tender, so fervent, so sweetly timid, so despairingly merry, a strange mixture of gladness and sorrow. The thought of death casts its melancholy shadow over their happiest hours, and consoles them tenderly in misfortune. They can weep! what poetry in a human tear! . . .

The shrill voice of the landlord's wife roused me from my slumbers. Without knowing what she wanted, half asleep, I followed her to the sleeping-apartment of her husband, and there lay the poor man, his night-cap drawn over his eyes, dreaming heavily. A smile was on his lips, and he stammered, "Vashti! Queen Vashti! fear not Ahasuerus, beloved Vashti!"

With fury in her eye, the enraged woman whispered to me, "Are you now convinced, Herr Schnabelewopski? He carries on love intrigues with Queen Vashti. He prefers even a heathen to me; but I am a wife and a Christian, and you shall see how I avenge myself."

With these words she snatched the bedclothes from her husband, and began to lash him most unmercifully with a leathern thong. He, so suddenly and disagreeably awakened from his Biblical dreams, shouted as loudly as if Susa were in flames or Holland in water, so that the neighbourhood was soon in an uproar. The next day it was rumoured throughout all Leyden that the landlord had found me at dead of night in company of his wife.

Abominable jealousy! through it one of my most pleasant dreams was interrupted, and the life of little Simson jeopardised.

Had the landlady of "The Red Cow" been an Italian

she would probably have poisoned my food, but, being a Hollanderess, she only sent me most wretched food. Already the very next day did we suffer the consequences of her woman's anger. The first dish was—no soup. This was dreadful, especially to a well-bred person like myself, who had been accustomed from youth to eat soup every day, and who, until now, could not imagine a world where in the morning the sun does not rise in its course and where at noon soup is not served in *its* course. The second dish consisted of beef, which was as cold and tough as Myron's cow. Next, came a fish, of which the less said the better. Last, came a large fowl, which, far removed from stilling hunger, looked lean and emaciated, as if it was itself hungry, so that out of compassion for it we could not eat a bite.

"And now little Simson," cried fat Dricksen, "do you still believe in a God? Is this justice? The landlord's wife visits Schnabelewopski at dead of night, and here in broad daylight we must suffer for it."

"Oh, God! Oh, God!" sighed the little one, vexed at such atheistic outbreaks, and perhaps also at the dinner. Embittered by such quizzing, he launched into an enthusiastic defence of deism, concluding as follows: "What the sun is to the flowers, that is God to humanity. When the rays of that heavenly luminary touch the flowers, they merrily shoot upwards, and open their petals and unfold their most varied and most beautiful colours. At night, when their sun has departed, they stand sorrowfully with closed petals, sleeping or dreaming of the kisses of those golden rays. Those flowers that stand always in the shade become stunted in growth, colourless, and deformed, and fade away, cheerless and unhappy. But those flowers which vegetate in darkness, in old subterranean dungeons and convent ruins, become hideous and poisonous; they creep on the earth like serpents, and their breath is——"

"You need not spin out your Biblical parables any further," cried Dricksen. "You, little Simson, are a pious

flower basking in the divine sunshine, and drinking in the holy rays of virtue and love, till your soul is as radiant as a rainbow; whereas we, who are turned away from God, fade colourless and hideous, perhaps even spread pestilential vapours."

"At Frankfort I once saw a clock," said little Simson, "that did not believe in a clockmaker. It was made of pinchbeck, and kept time wretchedly."

"I will show you that such a clock can at least strike," answered Dricksen, threateningly.

And thus one word brought on another, finally causing a duel, in which little Simson received a dangerous wound.

This sad scene agitated me deeply. But my whole fury was turned against the woman who was indirectly the cause of the calamity. With my heart full of rage and grief, I stormed in upon the landlady of "The Red Cow."

"Monster! why didst thou send no soup?" These were the words with which I greeted my landlady the moment I met her in the kitchen. She turned pale; even the porcelain on the mantelpiece trembled at the tones of my voice. I was as fierce as man can only be when he has missed his daily soup and his best friend has received a thrust in the lung.

"Monster! why didst thou send no soup?" I repeated in thunder tones, while the woman, conscious of her guilt, stood speechless and motionless before me. But finally the tears streamed from her eyes, as from open flood-gates. But even this sight could not assuage my wrath, and with increased bitterness I spoke: "O ye women! I know that ye can weep, but tears are not soup. Ye are created for our injury; your glance is falsehood, and your breath is deception. Who first ate the apple that brought sin into the world? It is true that geese saved the Capitol; but a woman caused the destruction of Troy. O Troy! Troy! ye sacred strongholds of Priam! ye fell through the fault of a woman Who led Mark Antony to his ruin? Who demanded the head of

John the Baptist? Who was the cause of Abelard's misfortunes? A woman. History is full of examples how ye have undone us. All ye do is folly, all ye think is ingratitude. We give you our best—the holiest flame of our hearts—our love. What do ye give us in return? Meat, wretched beef, and still more wretched fowl. Monster, why didst thou send no soup?"

In vain did Myn Frow stammer forth excuses; in vain did she conjure me by our past love to forgive her this once. She promised henceforth to send better food and still charge only six florins, notwithstanding that the landlord of "The Jackdaw" asks eight florins for his ordinary fare. She went so far as to promise me oyster-patty for the following day; yea, verily, in the tender tones of her voice methought I heard the fragrant word "Truffles."

But I remained steadfast, I was determined to break with her for ever, and left the kitchen with the tragic words, "Adieu! in this life you shall cook for me no more."

WILHELM HAUFF

(1802–1827)

THE COLD HEART

(Translated by M. A. FABER)

THE traveller through Swabia ought not to forget also to penetrate some little distance into the Black Forest, not so much on account of the trees (although one does not find such a multitude of magnificent pines) as on account of the people, who are quite unlike those of the surrounding neighbourhood.

They are taller than ordinary, broad-shouldered and strong-limbed, and it would seem as though the invigorating fragrance with which the pine trees perfume the morning air had endowed them from youth with freer breathing, with a clearer eye, and with higher, if ruder courage than belong to the people of the plains and valleys, who dwell outside the forest. And they differ from these, not only in size and bearing, but also in dress and in manners.

The inhabitants of the Baden side of the Black Forest dress in the most picturesque costume. The men allow the beard to grow as nature has ordained, and their black jackets, their enormous tightly-plaited trousers, their red stockings and broad-brimmed peaked hats, impart to them a peculiar, but at the same time a grand and dignified appearance. The occupation of these people is the manufacture of glass; they also make clocks, which they carry about the neighbourhood for sale.

A people of the same race dwell on the opposite side of the

forest, but their mode of labour has imparted to them habits and customs very different from those of the glass-makers. They trade with their forest; that is, they fell and hew their pines, float them down the river Nagold to the Neckar, and from the Upper Neckar to the Rhine, far down into Holland; so that even on the sea coast the Black Foresters and their floats are familiar objects. They halt at every town on the way down the rivers, and tarry with proud dignity to see whether any one desires to purchase planks and beams from them, but their strongest and longest beams they sell at high prices to the Dutch Mynheers for ship-building purposes.

These people are accustomed to a rough and wandering life. Their great delight is in floating down the stream on their rafts; their grief is being obliged to wend their way home along the banks. Then their employment causes their gala dress to differ widely from that of the glass-makers in the other portion of the Black Forest. They wear jackets of dark linen-cloth, broad green braces over the wide chest, and black leathern breeches, from a pocket of which a brass rule peeps out as a token of dignity; but their real pride is in their boots, which are probably the largest to be found in any part of the world, for they can be drawn up fully two spans above the knee, and thus these raftsmen are able to walk through water three feet in depth without getting their feet in the least wet.

Up to within a recent date the inhabitants of the Black Forest believed in wood-spirits; indeed it is only in quite modern times that they have been induced to give up this foolish superstition. It is curious that (according to the traditions of the forest) even these wood-spirits present a similar difference in costume. Thus we are assured that the little glass-man (a good little spirit not more than three feet and a half in height) never showed himself in any dress but that of a peaked hat with a broad brim, a jacket, trousers, and red stockings.

Dutch Michael, on the contrary, who frequented the other

side of the forest, is said to have been a broad-shouldered giant in the garb of a raftsman, and several who saw him assert that all their fortune would not suffice to pay for such a calf's skin as was required to make his boots. So large, they say, were these, that without any exaggeration an ordinary man could stand up to his throat in one of them.

With these wood-spirits a young Black Forester is said to have met with an adventure, which I will relate.

There lived in the Black Forest a widow, Frau Barbara Munkin; her husband had been a charcoal-burner; and after his death she gradually trained her son, a boy sixteen years of age, to the same business.

Young Peter Munk, who was a smart boy, was very well content, because at home he had never seen men do otherwise than sit the whole week over a smoking kiln, or go (all black and sooty, objects of aversion) down into the town to sell their charcoal. Now a charcoal-burner has plenty of time for reflection, and thus it happened that when Peter Munk was sitting beside his kiln the dark trees of the forest that were all around him and the deep silence that reigned everywhere excited involuntary melancholy and yearnings within his breast. He felt troubled and uneasy; wherefore, he did not know. At length he discovered the cause of his discomfort, and this was—his position. "A solitary black, charcoal-burner!" said he to himself. "It is a wretched life. How respectable the glass-makers, the clock-makers, and even the musicians look on Sunday evening! But if Peter Munk were washed clean, and nicely dressed in father's best jacket with silver buttons and in brand-new red stockings, and some one walking behind me were to say to himself: 'Who is that genteel lad?' and were to praise my stockings and my stately walk in his heart, see! so soon as he should have passed me, and should turn round to look, he would certainly exclaim: 'Oh! it is only Peter Munk, the charcoal-burner.'"

The raftsmen on the other side of the forest were also

objects of his envy. Whenever these forest giants came over with their fine clothes, carrying a half-hundredweight of silver upon their persons in buttons, buckles and chains; when, with outstretched legs and haughty mien, they looked on at the dance, swore in Dutch and smoked (like the most distinguished Mynheers) out of Cologne pipes an ell in length, then he represented a raftsman to himself as the very ideal of a happy man. And when these favourites of fortune dived into their pockets, and brought out whole handfuls of thalers, and would throw the dice for six batzners (pieces of silver coin), and lose or win five florins here, ten there, he would lose all self-possession and glide away sorrowfully to his hut. For on many a holiday he had seen one or another of these timber-lords lose more at play in one evening than poor Father Munk had earned in a year.

There were three of these men in particular, of whom he knew not which to admire most. One was a large stout man with a red face, who passed for the richest man in all the country round. He was always called "Fat Ezekiel." He went twice every year to Amsterdam with timber for building, and had the good fortune always to sell at such a much higher price than any one else that instead of returning home on foot like the others, he was always able to drive grandly in a coach.

The next was the tallest and thinnest man in all the forest; he was called "Lank Schlurker," and Munk envied him chiefly on account of his extraordinary audacity; he would contradict the most respectable people, and even if the public-house were crowded to excess, would insist on requiring and occupying more space than four of the stoutest men; for he always either planted his elbows on the table, or bent up one of his long legs beside him on the bench, yet no one dared to thwart him, because he was so immensely rich.

The third was a young, handsome man who danced better than any one far or near, and who was for this reason

nicknamed the "Dance-room King." He had been quite a poor man, and had been a servant to one of the timber-lords; suddenly he became very rich. Some said he had found a pot of gold under an old pine, others maintained that, at a spot in the Rhine not far from Bingen, he had with the pole which the raftsmen frequently thrust at fish brought up a parcel of gold pieces, which parcel belonged to the great Nibelungen treasure lying buried there. Be that as it may, he suddenly became rich, and was looked upon as a prince by every one, young and old.

Peter Munk often thought of these three men when he was sitting alone in the pine forest. True, all three of them had one grand fault which caused them to be hated, and this was their insatiable avarice, their total want of feeling towards those who were either in debt or poor, for the Black Foresters are in general a very kind-hearted people. But every one knows what happens in these cases; although they were hated for their avarice, yet they were held in consideration for their wealth, for who could, like them, throw away thalers as though money were to be shaken off the pine trees?

"Things cannot go on as they are much longer," Peter said to himself one day in a fit of troubled melancholy (for the previous day had been a holiday, and the inn had been full of people); "if I do not soon meet with better luck I shall do myself some mischief. Oh! that I were rich and a person of importance like fat Ezekiel, or lank Schlurker; or a man of fame able to throw my thalers instead of kreutzers to the musicians like the 'Dance-room King!' Where did the fellow get his money from?"

He pondered over every possible means of getting money; but none pleased him. At length he bethought himself of the old traditions of his people, and how in ancient times men had become rich by means of Michael the Dutchman, and of the glass-man. During his father's lifetime other poor people had often come to pay visits at the house, and

had talked a great deal of wealthy men and in what way they had become rich. In these narrations the glass-man played a conspicuous part. Indeed, when Peter came to reflect, he could almost recall the verses that were to be uttered at the summit of the mountain in the heart of the pine forest in order to cause the glass-man to appear.

They began thus:

Hearken, thou for ages past
Master of the forest vast,
Thou whose treasured gold is laid
Deep beneath the pine-tree's shade,
Thou whose elfin form is shown——

But strain his memory as he would, he could not recall a single line more. Sometimes the thought occurred to him whether he should ask this or that old man how the incantation proceeded; but a certain feeling of dread, lest he should betray what was passing in his thoughts, withheld him from doing so. Besides, he came to the conclusion that the legend of the glass-man could only be known to very few; for there were not many rich people in the forest; and why had not his father and the other poor people tried their luck?

At last he led his mother on to talk about the little man. She repeated what he already knew; she could only tell him the first line of the invocation; but said that the spirit would only show himself to those who were born on a Sunday between the hours of eleven and two. He, then, exactly answered the requirements, if he had but known the lines; for he had been born on a Sunday at twelve—at noon.

When Peter Munk, the charcoal-burner, heard this he became almost beside himself with delight and with eagerness to undertake this adventure. It seemed to him that to know a portion of the lines and to have been born on a Sunday were sufficient to compel the little glass-man to show himself.

Therefore one day when he had sold all his charcoal he lighted no new kiln, but dressed himself in his father's best

jacket, and in his new red stockings, put on his Sunday hat, took his five-foot blackthorn stick in his hand, and bade his mother farewell in these words: "I must go to the office in the town; for the lots will soon be drawn for service in the army, and I wish to remind the officer that you are a widow and I your only son.

His mother praised his intention; however, he went straight to the pine-grove.

The pine-grove stands at the summit of the Black Forest, and in those days there was not a village, not a hut within a circle of three leagues from it, for the superstitious people deemed its vicinity unsafe. Also, tall and magnificent as were the pines, yet within this district no one would willingly fell timber; for it had frequently happened when wood-cutters had felled trees there that the axe-head had sprung from the haft and had wounded them in the feet, or that the trees had fallen suddenly, carrying the men down also and injuring or even killing them; and one of the finest trees from the grove had been useless except for fuel, since the raftsmen would never take a single stem from the pine-grove upon their floats, for the tradition was current that if a tree from the pine-grove were on the float both men and timber would be unlucky.

This was the reason why the trees grew so thickly and so tall in the pine-grove that even in broad noonday it was almost as dark as night. To Peter the whole scene was fearful; for he could hear no sound of an axe, no voice, no step but his own: the very birds seemed to shun this thick pine-grove.

Peter, the charcoal-man, had now reached the highest point of this pine-grove, and was standing before a pine of enormous circumference, for which a Dutch ship-owner would have paid down many thousands of florins on the spot.

This, thought he, is a very likely place for the keeper of the treasure to live in. He then took off his large Sunday hat, made a low bow before the tree, cleared his voice and said in

a trembling tone, "I wish you a good evening, Herr Glass-man," but he received no reply—all was silent as before.

"Perhaps I ought to repeat the verses," he thought, and then he murmured:

Hearken, thou for ages past
Master of the forest vast,
Thou whose treasured gold is laid
Deep beneath the pine-tree's shade,
Thou whose elfin form is shown——

As he said these words, he saw (to his great horror) a very small, strange figure peeping out from behind the thick trunk of the pine. He fancied he saw the glass-man just as he had been described: the little black jacket, the red stockings, the little hat—all were there; and he thought he perceived even the pallid, but delicate and intelligent face of which he had heard talk. But alas! just as suddenly as this little glass-man had peeped out, just so suddenly did he disappear!

"Herr Glass-man," exclaimed Peter, after some hesitation, "be so kind as not to take me for a fool. Herr Glass-man, if you fancy that I did not see you, you are very much mistaken—I saw you plainly peeping from behind the tree."

Still there was no reply, but sometimes he thought he could distinguish a low hoarse laugh behind the tree. At length impatience overcame the fear which had restrained him until now.

"Wait a while, you little rogue," he cried, "I will soon catch you," and with one bound he sprang behind the pine tree; but there was no treasure-keeper in the green pine-wood—nothing but a pretty little squirrel that ran up the tree.

Peter Munk shook his head; he perceived that he had brought the charm to a certain point and that perhaps only one rhyme was wanting to enable him to entice forth the little glass-man. He thought now of this, now of that, yet could discover nothing. The squirrel sat on the lower-

branches of the pine and seemed sometimes to encourage, sometimes to mock him. It cleaned itself, it curled its beautiful tail, it looked at him with its intelligent eyes; but at length he became almost afraid of being alone with the animal. For now the squirrel appeared to have the head of a man and to wear a three-cornered hat, then it looked like any ordinary squirrel, except that on its hind feet it had red stockings and black shoes. In short, it was a comical creature; yet charcoal-Peter was afraid of it, for he thought all was not right about it.

Peter retreated with quicker steps than those with which he had come. The twilight of the forest seemed to grow deeper and deeper, the trees to stand more thickly together, and he began to be so alarmed that he broke into a run, and it was not until he heard the barking of dogs in the distance and perceived the smoke of a cottage among the trees that he became more calm.

When he approached and could distinguish the dress of the people in the hut, he perceived that in his anxiety he had taken exactly the wrong direction, and had arrived in the district belonging to the raftsmen instead of that of the glass-men. The people who lived in this hut were wood-cutters; an old man, his son the master of the house, and some grown-up grand-children.

They received charcoal-Peter, who requested lodging for the night, hospitably, without asking his name or place of abode; gave him some apple-wine, and in the evening a large mountain-cock, the most dainty dish of the Black Forest, was put on the table.

After supper the good woman of the house and her daughters seated themselves at their distaffs round the large blaze which the younger ones fed with the choicest pieces of fire-resin. The grandfather, the guest, and the master of the house smoked and looked on at the women, and the boys were occupied in carving wooden spoons and forks.

The storm howled outside in the forest and roared among

the pines, heavy blows were heard in different directions, and it often seemed as though whole trees were falling and crashing against each other. The courageous boys wished to run out into the forest to look at this fearfully beautiful scene, but their grandfather restrained them with grave words and looks. "I would advise no one to go outside the door just now," he cried; "for, by Heavens! he will never come back again; the Dutchman Michael is this night felling a new raft-load in the forest."

The young people stared at him in astonishment; they might certainly have heard before of the Dutchman Michael, but now they entreated their grandfather to tell them something about him.

Peter Munk, who had heard Dutch Michael spoken of on the other side of the forest in a vague manner, also joined in their request, and inquired of the old man who and what Michael was. "He is lord of the forest; and I suppose, from your not having heard of him at your age, that you must either live on the other side of the pine-forest, or else that you have never been far from home. But I will tell you all that I know of the Dutchman Michael, and what tradition says concerning him. Some hundred years ago (at least so my grandfather used to say) there were far and near no more honest people than the Black Foresters. In these days, since so much money has come into the country, men have grown dishonest and wicked. The young men dance and sing on Sunday, and swear, so that it is fearful to hear them. In former times they were quite different, and though the Dutchman Michael were to look in at the window at this moment, I would say, as I have often said before, that he is to blame for all this evil.

"There lived, some hundred years ago and more, a wealthy timber-lord who had many servants. He carried his trade far down the Rhine, and his work prospered, for he was a pious man. One evening a man came to his door, such as he had never seen. His dress resembled that of the

young men of the Black Forest, but he was a full head taller than any of them, and no one would have credited the existence of such a giant. This man asked the timber-lord for work, and the latter, looking at him and seeing that he was strong and able to carry heavy loads, agreed with him for his wages and they concluded the bargain. Michael was a workman such as this timber-lord had none other. In felling trees he was equal to three other men, and if six dragged one end he would lift the other by himself. When he had been felling timber for half a year, he went one day to his master and said to him, 'I have now to see what becomes of my timber; how would it be if you allowed me this time to take it down the river?' The timber-lord answered, 'I will not stand in your way, Michael, if you wish to go out a little into the world. It is true that for felling trees I require strong men such as you are, whereas for the river much dexterity is required; but be it so for this time.'

"And so it was; the raft with which he was to go had eight divisions, and the last of these was filled with the largest beams. And what happened on the evening before starting? Sturdy Michael brought down eight more beams to the waterside, thicker and longer than any that had ever been seen, and he carried them on his shoulder as though they were poles, so that every one was amazed. To this day no one knows where he felled them.

"The timber-lord laughed in his heart when he saw this, for he calculated how much these beams would sell for. But Michael said, 'Herr, these are for me to travel on, I could not journey on those little chips yonder.' His master was going to give him a pair of raftsmen's boots as a token of thanks, but he threw them on one side, and brought out a pair such as never could be matched. My grandfather assured me that they weighed a hundred pounds and were seven feet in length.

"The raft started; and if Michael had previously astonished the wood-cutters, he now astonished the raftsmen,

for instead of the raft making slower progress, as one would have expected on account of the enormous beams, it flew forward like an arrow directly they reached the Neckar.

"In places where the Neckar took a bend and where the raftsmen usually had some trouble in keeping the rafts in the middle of the stream and in avoiding to run either on the gravel or sand, Michael always sprang into the water, and with one pull drew the raft right or left, so that he glided by without danger. Then, when he found a straight passage, he would run to the first joint, make all the poles fast, thrust his enormous beams into the gravel, and with one push the raft would dash forward so that the land, trees and villages seemed to be flying past. Thus they arrived at Cologne on the Rhine, where they usually sold their load, in half the time generally required. But when here, Michael said, 'You without doubt are skilled traders and understand your own interest. But do you suppose that these men in Cologne need all the timber that comes from the Black Forest for themselves? Not so; they purchase it from you for about half its value, and then sell it at a high price in Holland. Let us sell the small timber here and go on to Holland with the larger, and all we gain above the ordinary price will be our own profit!'

"Thus spoke the subtle Michael, and the others were content; some because they were well pleased to go on to Holland, others on account of the money. One solitary man alone was honest, and tried to dissuade them from running the property of their master into danger, and from cheating him of the higher price; but the others would not listen to him; they soon forgot his words, but the Dutchman Michael did not forget them.

"Thus they went down the Rhine with the timber, Michael managed the raft and brought them speedily to Rotterdam. There they were offered four times the former price, and large sums were paid, especially for Michael's gigantic beams. When the Black Foresters beheld all the

money they did not know how to contain themselves for joy. Michael divided it; one share for the timber-lord, the other three shares among the men. And now they consorted with sailors and all sorts of bad company in the inns, and squandered or gambled away their money; but Dutch Michael sold the brave man who had given them the warning to a crimp and nothing more was heard of him. From that time forward Holland became a paradise in the eyes of the men of the Black Forest, and Dutch Michael was their king. For a long time the timber-lords knew nothing of this traffic, and money, swearing, evil habits, drunkenness and gambling crept in from Holland unperceived.

"Dutch Michael was, so tradition says, at length nowhere to be found. Yet he is not dead: his spectre has appeared in the forest within a hundred years, and it is said that he has been of great assistance to many in getting rich, but at the cost of their souls. More than this I will not say. But this much is certain; that on stormy nights like this he chooses out the finest pines in that pine-grove where it is said that no mortal can fell trees, and my father has seen him break a trunk four feet thick like a rush. He makes a present of such to those who turn from the right path and go to him About midnight they float the raft and he goes with them to Holland. If I were king and master in Holland, I would order grape-shot to be fired into them; for a ship which has but one plank in her bought of Dutch Michael is sure to sink. Hence it is that one hears of so many shipwrecks. Were it not so how could a strong, fine vessel so large as a church founder at sea? But so often as Dutch Michael on a stormy night fells a pine in the Black Forest, so often an old plank springs out from the joints of some vessel, the water rushes in, and the vessel is lost with all on board.

"This is the legend of Dutch Michael, and it is certain that every evil in the Black Forest originates with him. Oh, yes, he can make a man rich!" added the old man in a mysterious tone; "but I should not like to take anything from him.

I would not stand in the shoes of fat Ezekiel or lank Schlurker at any price. The Dance-room King is also said to have sold himself to him."

The storm had lulled during the old man's narration; the girls lighted their lamps timidly and went away; the men laid a bag of leaves on the stone-bench as a pillow for Peter Munk and wished him good-night.

Charcoal-Peter Munk had never had such troubled dreams as those of that night. Sometimes he fancied that the dark gigantic form of Dutch Michael had burst open the window and with his monstrous arm was pushing in a bag filled with gold pieces which jingling one against the other, made a pleasant, ringing sound. Sometimes he saw the friendly little glass-man riding round the room on an immense flask, and he thought he could hear the subdued laugh, as he had heard it in the pine-grove. Then came a murmuring sound in his left ear:

In Holland is gold
To be had at your will;
For a trifle 'tis sold
So your money-bags fill
With gold! gold! gold!

Next at the right ear he heard the ditty of the treasure-keeper of the pine-forest, and a gentle voice whispered, "Stupid charcoal-Peter, stupid Peter Munk, that can find no rhyme to 'shown' and yet was born at twelve o'clock on a Sunday! Rhyme, stupid Peter, rhyme!"

He sighed, he groaned in his sleep, he wearied himself to find a rhyme; but as he had never made one in all his life, his labour in his dream was in vain. However, when he awoke with the first glow of dawn, his dream rose before him with strange vividness. He seated himself at the table with folded arms, and meditated over the whispers which seemed still to sound in his ears. "Rhyme, stupid charcoal-Peter Munk, rhyme," he said to himself, and he rapped his forehead with his finger; but no rhyme would come. Whilst

he was sitting thus, and looking straight before him with a troubled gaze, thinking of a rhyme for "shown," three young men in the forest passed in front of the house, and as they passed one was singing:

At eve from the summit above
I anxiously gazed o'er the vale
And I looked on my heart's dearest love—
She was riding all tearful and pale
Alas! gloomy morning hath shown
She hath bidden adieu to the glen,
She hath left me for ever alone,
No, ne'er may I see her again!

The words fell like an electric shock on Peter's ear. He rose hurriedly, rushed out of the house (though he thought he could hardly have heard aright), sprang after the three young men, and seized the singer hastily and roughly by the arm. "Stop, friend," he cried. "What rhyme have you there for shown? Do be kind enough to repeat to me what you were singing."

"What business is it of yours, fellow?" replied the forester. "I may sing what I choose. And let loose my arm or——"

"Nay, you must tell me what you sang!" exclaimed Peter, almost beside himself and holding him still more tightly.

However the two others, when they saw this, hesitated no longer, but fell upon Peter with heavy blows and gave him a sound drubbing, till, from sheer pain, he loosed his hold on the third and sank on his knees exhausted

"Now you have your deserts," they said, laughing. "And, mark you, silly boy, never again attack people like us in the open road."

"Ah! I will mark it well!" answered Peter with a sigh, "but since I have had all these blows, be so kind as to tell me distinctly what that man sang."

They laughed still more and mocked at him; but he who had sung the song repeated the words to him, and they proceeded on their way laughing and singing.

"Then," said the poor beaten fellow, as he raised himself with some difficulty, "alone rhymes to shown. Now, little glass-man, we will try again to speak a word together."

He went into the hut, fetched his hat and long stick, bade farewell to the people of the cottage, and took his way back to the pine-grove. He walked slowly and thoughtfully; for he had to bethink himself of the verses. At last, when he had already reached the precincts of the pine-grove, and the pines were becoming thicker and higher, he had recalled the verses to mind, and joyfully he bounded to the summit. A colossal man in the dress of a raftsman, with a pole as long as a mast in his hand, stepped our from behind the pines. Peter Munk almost sank to the earth when he saw this man turn towards him with measured steps; for he thought it was Dutch Michael and none other. The fearful figure remained silent, and Peter peeped at him occasionally with terror. He was, indeed, taller by a whole head than the tallest man that Peter had ever seen. His face was no longer that of a young man, neither was it old, though covered with furrows and wrinkles. He wore a linen jacket, and the enormous boots drawn over his leathern trousers seemed familiar to Peter from the legend.

"Peter Munk, what are you doing in the pine-grove?" inquired the forest king at length, in a deep threatening voice.

"Good morning, Landsmann," replied Peter, who tried to appear quite at his ease, although trembling violently, "I am wishing to go home through the pine-grove."

"Peter Munk," rejoined the other, casting at him a terrific and penetrating glance, "your road does not lie through this grove!"

"No, not my direct road," said Peter, "but it is so warm to-day that I thought it would be cooler this way."

"Do not tell falsehoods, charcoal-Peter," exclaimed Dutch Michael in a voice of thunder, "or I will strike you to the ground with my staff. Do you fancy that I did not see you

importuning the little man?" he added in a more gentle tone. "Well, well, that was a stupid trick, and it is lucky that you did not know the charm. He is a niggard, that little fellow, and does not bestow much, and he to whom he gives has not a merry life. Peter, you are a poor simpleton, and I am sorry for you. Such a handsome, gay, young fellow who might do something in the world, and yet you only burn charcoal. Where others can shake out thalers or ducats by the armful, you can scarcely chink a couple of farthings together. It is a miserable life——"

"That is true, you are quite right; it is a wretched life!"

"Well, I will not stop at this," continued the terrible Michael. "I have already helped many a brave boy out of poverty, and you would not be the first. But tell me, how many hundred thalers do you want to begin with?"

With these words he jingled the money in his gigantic pockets, till it sounded as it had done in the night in Peter's dream.

But Peter's heart thrilled with fear and anxiety at the words; he became hot and cold, for Dutch Michael did not look as though he would give away money from mere compassion, without requiring something in return. The mysterious words of the old man regarding those who had become rich recurred to his mind; and, a prey to inexpressible distress and alarm, he exclaimed, "Many thanks, sir, but I do not desire to have any dealings with you, and I know you already." He then ran away as fast as he could.

But the wood-spirit with his giant strides kept close beside him, and muttered in a hollow, threatening voice: "You will think better of it, Peter; it is written in your forehead; it may be read in your eyes; you cannot escape from me. Do not run so fast; do but listen to a word of reason: here is my boundary close!"

But when Peter heard this, and saw a little ditch not far from him, he hastened on still faster, that he might cross the boundary, so that at length Michael was obliged to run

faster, and pursued him with oaths and threats. The young man cleared the ditch with a bound of despair, for he saw how the wood-spirit stretched out his pole and would have let it fall heavily upon him. He reached the opposite side in safety, and the pole splintered in the air as if against an invisible wall, and a large piece fell across near Peter. He took it up triumphantly to throw it back to Dutch Michael; but at this moment he felt the piece of wood move in his hand, and to his horror, he saw that it was an immense snake that he was holding and which was already gaping at him with foaming tongue and lightning glance. He let go of it, but it had already twisted itself firmly round his arm, and was pushing its vibrating head nearer and nearer to his face. Suddenly an enormous mountain cock flew down, seized the head of the snake in its beak, and carried it up with it into the air, whilst Dutch Michael, who had seen all this from the ditch, howled and roared and raged as the snake was carried away by a stronger than itself.

Trembling and exhausted, Peter proceeded on his way. The path became steeper, the country wilder, and he shortly found himself at the giant pine. As on the previous day, he made his reverence to the invisible little glass-man, and then began:

Hearken, thou for ages past
Master of the forest vast,
Thou whose treasured gold is laid
Deep beneath the pine-tree's shade,
Thou whose elfin form is shown
To the Sunday-born alone!

"You have not quite succeeded, but since you are a Sunday-child, charcoal-Peter Munk, that will suffice," said a soft, gentle voice near him. He looked round with astonishment, and saw, sitting under a handsome pine, a little old man in a black jacket and red stockings, with the unusual large hat upon his head. He had a pleasing and friendly countenance, and wore a little beard as fine as a spider's web. He was smoking a pipe made of blue glass

which had a very strange appearance, and as Peter drew nearer he saw to his astonishment that the clothes, shoes, and hat of the little man were also all made of coloured glass. This was as flexible as though still hot, for it yielded to his every movement.

"You have met that churl Dutch Michael," said the little man, whilst between each word he gave a peculiar cough. "He tried to frighten you; but I have got his staff from him, and he will never attack you again."

"Indeed, Herr Treasure-keeper," replied Peter with a low bow, "I was very much alarmed. You then were doubtless that gentleman, the mountain-cock, who bit the snake and killed it. I offer you my most hearty thanks. But I am come to ask counsel of you. Things fare ill and uncomfortably with me. A charcoal-burner cannot advance himself; and as I am young, I thought that I might do better for myself. I often see others who have done so in a short time. Take, for instance, Ezekiel and the Dance-room King, with whom money is as plentiful as straws."

"Peter," said the little man very gravely, and puffing the smoke from his pipe far up into the air—"Peter," said he, "say nothing to me of these men. What do they gain by having for a few years the appearance of happiness, only that afterwards they should be most unhappy? You should not despise your trade. Your father and grandfather were estimable men, and they also followed it. Peter Munk, I will not believe that it is love of idleness that brings you to me."

Peter was frightened at the seriousness of the little man and coloured. "No," said he, "I know, my Lord treasure-keeper of the pine-grove, that idleness is the parent of all vices, but you cannot think ill of me if some other position in life be more pleasing to me than my own; a charcoal-burner is, indeed, but little esteemed in the world, and glass-men, raftsmen, and clock-makers are all so much more esteemed!"

"Pride often comes before a fall," answered the little lord of the pine-forest in a rather more kindly tone. "You are a strange race, you men! It is seldom that any one of you is fully content with the position in which he has been born and brought up; and it is certain that if you were a glass-man you would wish to be a timber-lord; and if you were a timber-lord then it would be the appointment of forest-keeper or the house of the bailiff that would suit you. If you will promise to work bravely I will help you to something better, Peter. It is my practice to grant three wishes to every Sunday child who knows how to find me. The two first are unrestricted, the third I can refuse if it prove foolish. Therefore wish now for something; but, Peter, let it be something good and useful."

"Hurrah! You are an excellent little glass-man, and are rightly named the treasure-keeper, for the home of all treasures is with you. Well, then, if I may wish for whatever my heart most desires, for the first thing I will wish that I may be able to dance even better than the Dance-room King, and have as much money in my pocket as fat Ezekiel."

"You fool!" cried the little man angrily "What a pitiful wish is this—to be able to dance well and to have money to play! Are you not ashamed, silly Peter, to delude yourself as regards your happiness? Of what use will it be to either your mother or yourself that you are able to dance? What will your money avail you when, according to your wish, it is to be spent at the inn and to remain there like that of the Dance-room King? Thus you will have nothing left for the whole week, and will be as poverty-stricken as before; one more wish I will allow you to subject to control, but take heed that you wish with more discretion!"

Peter scratched his ear, and after a little hesitation he said. "Then now I wish for the handsomest and most luxurious glass-house in the whole of the Black Forest, with money and everything necessary for living in it."

"Nothing more?" inquired the little man with anxiety, "nothing more, Peter?"

"Well, you might add a horse and a little carriage."

"Oh, foolish charcoal-Peter!" cried the little man, and in his displeasure he threw down his glass-pipe so that it broke into a hundred pieces. "Horses! a little carriage! Good sense, I tell you, good sense, sound common sense, and judgment you ought to have wished for, and not for horses and carriages. However, do not look so melancholy; we shall see that it will not be altogether an injury to you, for the second wish was not entirely a foolish one. A good glass-house gives shelter to its owner and master; but if you added thereto good sense and discretion, the carriage and horses would have come of themselves."

"But, Herr Treasure-keeper," replied Peter, "I have still one wish left, so that I might wish for good sense, if it be so necessary for me as you think."

"Not so; you will find yourself in many perplexities in which you will be glad that you have one wish left; now go home. Here," said the spirit of the pine-forest, "are two thousand florins, and this is enough; do not come to me again to ask for money; for if you do so I shall be obliged to hang you up to the highest pine; for thus I have done ever since I have lived in the forest. Old Winkfritz, who had the largest glass-house in the lower forest, died three days ago. Go thither to-morrow early, and make a fair offer for the business. Behave well, be industrious, and I will visit you sometimes, and will help and advise you, since as yet you have not asked for sense and judgment. But—and I say this very seriously, Peter—your first wish was a bad one. Beware of running to the inn, Peter; it never did any one good for any length of time."

Whilst thus speaking the little man had taken out a new pipe of most beautiful glass, and filled it with dried fir-cones and put into his little toothless mouth. He then drew out an immense burning-glass, moved into the sunshine, and

lighted his pipe. When he had finished he offered Peter his hand in a friendly manner, gave him some kind instructions about his road, smoked and puffed more and more quickly, and at length vanished in a cloud of smoke (like that from real Dutch tobacco), gradually and slowly disappeared, curling amid the summit of the pines.

When Peter arrived at home he found his mother in great anxiety about him, for the good woman believed nothing less than that her son had been carried off for a soldier. He, however, was in very good spirits, and told her how he had met with a kind friend in the forest who had advanced him some money that he might set up in some other business than that of charcoal-burner Although his mother had already lived for thirty years in a charcoal-burner's hut and was as well used to the appearance of sooty men as a miller's wife is to the floury face of her husband, yet she had pride enough to despise her former circumstances so soon as Peter suggested a more brilliant lot to her, and she said, "Yes, as the mother of a man who owns a glass-house I shall be something different from neighbours Grete and Bete, and henceforward I shall take a seat in church among the rich."

Her son came to an agreement with the inheritor of the glass-house, he retained the workmen whom he found there, and manufactured glass day and night. At first the occupation pleased him, and he used to go to the glass-house at his ease. He walked about with his hands in his pockets and with an air of importance, peeped about now here, now there; spoke to this one and that, at which his workpeople often laughed not a little; and his great delight was to see the glass blowing. He often worked at this himself, and blew the strangest forms from out of the soft mass. But he soon became tired of this occupation, and began to come to the glass-house for only one hour in the day, then only once in two days, at last only once a week, and his workmen did as they liked. All this arose from his frequent visits to the inn. On the Sunday after he had come from the pine-grove he

went there, and who should be already bounding in the dancing-room but the Dance-room King, whilst fat Ezekiel was sitting behind his tankard, throwing the dice like a prince.

Peter quickly felt in his pockets to see whether the little glass-man had kept his word; and behold! his pockets were full of gold and silver; and his legs began to thrill and tremble as though he must of necessity spring forward and dance. When the first dance was ended he placed himself with his partner close by the Dance-room King, and when the latter made a bound three feet high, Peter made one of four feet; and when he danced in peculiar and graceful steps, then Peter twisted and turned his own feet in such a manner that all the spectators were lost in delight and admiration. But when it became known in the dance-room that Peter had purchased a glass-house, and when it was seen that in dancing as he passed the musicians he threw them silver coin, astonishment was unbounded. Some opined that he had found treasure in the forest; others supposed that he had received a legacy; but all respected him now, and held him to be a made man, simply because he now had money. Indeed, on that very evening he lost twenty florins by gambling, and yet the money in his pockets rattled and jingled as though there were still a hundred thalers left there

When Peter saw how highly he was esteemed he hardly knew how to contain himself for joy and pride. He threw his money about on all sides, and shared it liberally with the poor, for, indeed, he knew well how heavily poverty had once pressed upon himself. The skill of the Dance-room King was cast quite into the shade by the supernatural art of the new dancer, and Peter now received the name of "Emperor of the Dance." The most enterprising gamblers on that Sunday did not stake so much as he did, but neither did they lose so much. And yet the more he lost the more he won, for everything happened just as he had desired of

the little glass-man. He had wished always to have in his pocket as much money as fat Ezekiel, and this was exactly the man to whom he lost his money. Thus when he lost twenty or thirty florins at a time, directly that Ezekiel pocketed them he had the same sum again in his own pockets.

By degrees he carried his carousing and gambling to a greater pitch than did the most idle people in the Black Forest, and he was called "Gambling Peter" more often than "Emperor of the Dance," for now he played on almost every working-day. Hence his glass-house fell to ruin by degrees; and Peter's want of sense was the cause. He ordered as much glass as possible to be made; but he had neglected with the house to buy also the secret as to where the glass could best be sold. At length, he did not know what to do with the accumulation of glass, and he sold it off to the travelling traders that he might have wherewith to pay his workmen.

One evening he was returning home from the inn; and, notwithstanding the quantity of wine which he had taken to keep up his spirits, he was thinking with grief and horror of the ruin of his property, when all at once he perceived that some one was walking beside him. He looked round, and see! it was the little glass-man. He fell into a great passion, assumed a haughty manner, and swore that the little man was to blame for all his misfortunes. "What shall I do now with the horse and carriage?" he exclaimed. "Of what use is my house and all my glass? I lived more happily when I was only a charcoal-burner, and I had then no cares; now I know not at what moment the bailiff may not come, value my goods and sell them by auction on account of my debts."

"Is it so?" replied the little glass-man. "So! The blame is then to be laid on me if you are unfortunate! Is this your gratitude for my benefits? Who told you to make your foolish wishes? You wished to be a glass-man, and

were quite ignorant where you should sell your glass. Did I not tell you that you should be careful in wishing. You have been wanting, Peter, in common sense and discretion."

"What! common sense and discretion!" cried the other. "I am as prudent a fellow as any, and will prove it to you, my little glass-man," and with these words he seized the little man rudely by the collar, exclaiming, "Have I caught you now, Sir Treasure-keeper of the pine-wood? Now I will make my third wish, and grant it you shall. Here on the spot I wish for two hundred thousand thalers, and a house, and—— Oh! unfortunate me!" he cried, wringing his hand, for the little forestman had changed into molten glass and burned his hand like a flame of fire. But the little man was no longer visible.

For several days Peter's swollen hand kept his ingratitude and folly in his remembrance; but he stifled his conscience and said, "If they do sell my glass-house and all that I have, still fat Ezekiel will remain the same, and so long as he has money on Sundays I shall not want."

True, Peter! But suppose he has none! And thus it happened one day, and it was a strange warning.

One Sunday that Peter drove up to the inn the people were stretching their heads out of the windows, and one said, "Here comes gambling Peter!" another, "Yes, the Emperor of the Dancers, the rich glass-man," whilst a third shook his head and said, "People may talk much of his wealth, but they are also talking everywhere of his debts, and a man in the town was saying that the bailiff will not much longer delay to seize his goods."

Meanwhile rich Peter was courteously but pompously greeted by guests at the windows. He alighted proudly from his carriage, saying, "Good-evening, landlord. Has fat Ezekiel arrived?"

A deep voice answered, "Within, Peter! Your place has been kept for you. We are already here and at cards."

Peter Munk entered the room, felt in his pockets imme-

diately, and perceived that Ezekiel must be well supplied with money, for his pockets were full to the brim.

He seated himself at the table with the others, played, and won and lost here and there. Thus they went on playing till, when evening came, the other respectable people went home, and they played on by candle-light, till two players said, "We have had enough now, and must go home to wife and child!"

But gambling Peter asked fat Ezekiel to stay. For a long time he would not consent, but at last he exclaimed, "Very good! Now I will count my money and then we will throw the dice; five florins a point, for lower is mere child's play."

He took out his purse, counted his money, and found a hundred florins. Gambling Peter then knew how much he himself had, and had no occasion to count. But if Ezekiel had won before, now he lost point after point, and swore fearfully in consequence. Whenever he threw a triplet, Peter immediately threw one also, and always two pips higher. At last he put down his last five florins on the table, and cried, "Once more, and even if I lose this I will not leave off; for you can lend me some of your winnings, Peter. One good fellow will always help another!"

"As much as you like, even if it be a hundred florins," said the Emperor of the Dance, elated by his gains.

Fat Ezekiel rattled the dice and threw fifteen. "A triplet," he cried. "Now we shall see!"

But Peter threw eighteen, and a hoarse, familiar voice, behind him said, "Done, that was the last!"

He looked round, and there, large as a giant, stood Dutch Michael behind him. Terrified, he let fall the money which he had taken up. Fat Ezekiel did not see the apparition, but demanded that gambling Peter should hand him ten florins to bet with. Half in a dream, the latter put his hand in his pocket, but there was no money there. He searched the other pocket, but neither could any be found there. He turned his coat inside out, but not one red

copper fell out. And now first did he bethink himself of his wish, always to have as much money as fat Ezekiel. All had vanished like smoke.

Both the landlord and Ezekiel looked at him in amazement, as he sought everywhere and could not find his money. They would not believe that he had none; but at length, when they themselves had searched his pockets, they grew angry and swore that gambling Peter was a wicked enchanter, and had wished away both his own money and that which he had won to his own home. Peter defended himself stoutly; but appearances were against him. Ezekiel said he would tell the horrible story to every one in the Black Forest, and the landlord told him that he would go into the town early morning and make a complaint of Peter as an enchanter; and, he added, they should live to see him burnt. They then fell upon Peter, tore his jacket off him, and flung him out at the door.

Not a star was visible in the sky as Peter slunk home in melancholy mood, and yet he could perceive that a dark figure was striding close to him, who at length spoke thus: "All is over with you, Peter Munk; all your grandeur is at an end; and I could have warned you of this before, when you would not listen to me, but ran away to the stupid glass-man. Now you see what happens when people despise my counsel. But try your fortune once more with me. I am concerned at your fate; none ever repented who had recourse to me; and if you are not afraid of the path, I shall be all day to-morrow in the pine-grove ready to talk to you if you call me."

Peter knew well who it was that spoke thus to him, and he was seized with horror. He made no reply but ran quickly home.

When Peter went to his glass-house on Monday morning there were no workmen there; but there were instead people whom one does not like to see—namely, the bailiff and three officers of the law.

The bailiff wished Peter a good morning, inquired how he had slept, and then drew out a long paper in which Peter's creditors were enumerated.

"Can you pay, or can you not?" asked the bailiff with a stern look; "make your answer short, for I have not much time to wait, and it is three good hours' walk to the fort."

Peter, grown desperate, confessed that he had no longer anything, and left it to the bailiff to value the house, yard, factory and stables, carriage and horses; and whilst the bailiff and law-officers were going round examining and valuing everything, he thought, "It is not far to the pine-grove; as the little man has not helped me, I will for once make trial of the great man."

He ran to the pine-grove with as much speed as though the officers of justice were on his track. As he passed the spot on which he had first spoken to the glass-man, it seemed to him as though an invisible hand would have detained him; but he shook himself free and ran on further to the boundary which he had marked so well before. Almost breathless, he had scarcely called, "Dutch Michael! Dutch Michael!" before the giant raftsman stood before him, staff in hand.

"Are you come?" he said with a smile. "Have they tried to flay you, and to sell you to your creditors? Well, be calm! all your misfortunes spring from the glass-man, from this strait-laced, over-pious little fellow. If a fellow give anything he should give heartily, and not like this niggard. But come!" he continued, turning towards the forest, "follow me to my house, and there we will see whether we cannot strike a bargain!"

"Strike a bargain!" thought Peter. "What can he desire of me? What can I sell to him? Am I to render him some service, or what would he have?"

They went at first up a steep wood-path, and then suddenly stood by a dark, deep ravine. Dutch Michael sprang down the rock as though it were a marble staircase,

but Peter became paralysed with dread, for as soon as the former had reached the bottom of the ravine, he made himself as tall as a church-tower and stretched out an arm like a weaver's beam, and from it a hand as large as the inn-table, and exclaimed, in a voice which resounded like a funeral bell, " Stand on my hand and hold yourself steady by my fingers, and you will not fall."

Peter, trembling, did as he was ordered; took his stand on the hand and held on by the fingers of the giant.

Down he went deep and far; and yet, to Peter's astonishment, it did not grow darker; on the contrary, the daylight appeared to become brighter in the ravine, and his eyes could hardly bear it. As Peter descended, Dutch Michael made himself small again, and he now stood in his original stature in front of a house of similar excellence with those inhabited by the richer peasants of the Black Forest. The room into which Peter was conducted differed in no way from that belonging to ordinary mortals, except that it seemed very lonely.

The wooden-cased clock against the wall, the immense stove of Dutch titles, the broad benches, the furniture were all the same here as elsewhere.

Michael offered him a seat at the table, went out, and soon returned bringing a flask of wine and some glasses. He filled these, and then they began to talk. Dutch Michael discoursed so much of the enjoyments of the world, of foreign countries, of beautiful towns and rivers that Peter, conceiving a great longing to see all these, told the Dutchman so plainly.

" If you had the courage and strength of body to undertake some enterprise, still a few pulsations of your silly heart would make you tremble and then the mortifications caused by feelings of honour, by misfortune. Why should a sensible fellow care for such as these? Were you annoyed when you were lately called a deceiver and a wicked fellow? Did it vex you when the bailiff came to turn you out of your house?

What, tell me, what part of you was it that felt uncomfortable?"

"My heart," said Peter as he pressed his hand on his throbbing breast, for it seemed to him as though his heart was moving to and fro in anguish.

"You have," said Dutch Michael—"do not take it ill that I say so—you have thrown away many hundred florins on miserable beggars and other unworthy people. Of what use has this been to you? They have wished you blessings and good health in return, but have you been really any more healthy on that account? For one half of the money you have squandered you could have kept a physician. Blessing, yes, a pretty blessing, when one is seized for debt and thrust out of one's house! And what was it impelled you to feel in your pocket whenever a beggarman took off his ragged hat? Your heart, I repeat it, your heart; neither your eyes nor your tongue nor your arms nor your legs, but your heart."

"But how can one become so used to this as not to feel it? I have taken great pains to repress feeling, and yet my heart will still beat and make me uneasy."

"It is true," replied the other, laughing, "that you, poor fellow, can do nothing to prevent this, but give me your now scarce throbbing heart, and you shall see how comfortable you will then feel."

"You! my heart!" cried Peter with horror, "I should have to die on the spot. No, never!"

"Yes, if one of your surgeons wished to take your heart out of your body you would indeed die; but with me it is quite a different thing. Come here and convince yourself." With these words he stood up, opened the door of a room, and led Peter inside. His heart contracted convulsively as he crossed the threshold, but he did not notice it, for the spectacle presented to him was both strange and astounding. On several wooden shelves were ranged glasses with transparent fluid, and in each of these glasses lay a heart; there were

also labels on the glasses with names written on them which Peter read eagerly. There was the heart of the bailiff in T.; the heart of fat Ezekiel; the heart of the Dance-room King; the heart of the chief forester; there were six hearts of corn-dealers, eight of recruiting officers, three of brokers—in short, this was a collection of the hearts of people held in high esteem within a district of twenty-hours' journey.

"See," said Dutch Michael, "all these have cast aside the cares and anxieties of life. None of these hearts beat any more with pain or uneasiness, and their estimable owners are very comfortable in having banished the unquiet guest from their houses."

"But what do they carry about within them instead?" asked Peter, who felt almost ready to faint at what he saw.

"This," replied the other, and he extended to him from a bag a heart of stone.

"What!" replied Peter, unable to repress the shudder which passed through him, "a heart of marble? But, hark you, Herr Dutch Michael, this must feel very cold lying within one's breast."

"Well, very pleasantly cool. And why should a heart be warm? In winter its beat is of no use to you—a good cherry cordial would be of more good than a warm heart—and in summer, when all is hot and parching, you would not believe how cooling such a heart is; whilst, as I have said, it never throbs with anguish or fear, with foolish pity or any other uncomfortable emotion."

"And is this all that you are able to give me?" asked Peter discontentedly. "I hoped for money, and you would give me a stone."

"Well, I think that with a hundred thousand florins you will have enough for the present; if you manage it skilfully you will soon be a millionaire."

"A hundred thousand!" cried the poor charcoal-burner joyfully. "But do not thrust so violently at my heart; we shall come to terms with each other. Well, Michael,

give me the stone and the money and you may take this pendulum out of its case."

"I always thought you were a sensible fellow," said the Dutchman with a friendly smile. "Come, let us have another glass of wine, and then I will count out the money to you."

They then sat down together over the wine in the other room and drank again and again, till Peter fell into a deep sleep.

Charcoal-Peter Munk awoke at the joyous sound of a post-horn, and behold, he was sitting in a handsome carriage, driving along a broad road; and, as he leant out of the carriage, he saw the Black Forest lying behind him in the blue distance. At first he could scarcely believe it was himself who was seated in the carriage, for even his clothes were no longer the same as those he had worn on the previous day. However, he remembered everything so clearly that at last he gave up meditating, and cried, "Charcoal-Peter Munk am I, that is certain, and none other!"

He was astonished at himself that he did not feel at all melancholy now that he was for the first time quitting the quiet home and the forest where he had lived so long; not even when he thought of his mother, who was sitting helpless and in misery, did a tear rise to his eye, nor could he give one sigh—all appeared to him matters of such indifference.

"Ah! truly," he then said, "tears and sighs, home-sickness and melancholy, all come from the heart and, thanks to Dutch Michael, mine is cold and of stone." He laid his hand on his breast; all was still there, not one throb.

"If he keep his word as well with the hundred thousand florins as he has done about my heart, I shall be delighted," he said, and he began to examine his carriage.

He found clothes of every kind that he could desire, but no money. At last he came upon a pouch, and discovered several thousand thalers in gold, and bills on various houses in different large towns.

"Now I have all I wish for," he thought, and he seated

himself comfortably in a corner of the carriage and drove out into the wide world.

He travelled for two years; gazed out of his carriage right and left at all the houses he passed. When he stopped he merely looked at the sign of the inn, then went into the town and caused all the objects most worthy of note to be shown to him, but nothing gave him any pleasure—no pictures, no houses, no music, no dancing; his heart had no share in anything and his eyes and ears were dulled for all that was beautiful. No pleasures remained to him but those of eating, drinking and sleeping, and thus while he was travelling about the world he lived without any object, eating for amusement and sleeping from ennui. Now and then, it is true, he recollected how he had been more happy, more gay when he was still poor and obliged to work for his bread. Then all the beautiful views in the valley, the music and singing had given him the greatest delight; then he had been for hours long pleased with the simple fare that his mother was used to bring him at the kiln. When he thought thus of the past, it seemed very strange to him that now he could never smile, when formerly he used to laugh at the slightest joke; now when others laughed he would move his lips out of courtesy, but his heart never laughed with them. He felt that he was indifferent about everything, but contented he was not. It was not homesickness nor melancholy, but a blank, wearisome, joyless life which at length brought him home.

When he drove from Strasburg and perceived the dark forest of his home, when for the first time he beheld again the powerful forms, the true, friendly faces of the Black Foresters, when his ear caught the sounds of home, full, deep but cheering, he put his hand quickly to his heart, for his blood flowed faster and he fancied that he must needs both weep and rejoice at the same time; but—how could he be so foolish? Had he not a heart of stone? And stone is inanimate and can neither weep nor laugh.

He went first to Dutch Michael, who received him with his old friendliness of manner. "Michael," he said, "I have now travelled and seen everything, but all is uninteresting, and I am weary of all. It is true that this thing of stone which I carry in my heart is a great protection to me, for I am never angry and never sad, but then neither do I feel any pleasure, and it seems to me as though I were only half alive. Could you not make this stone heart capable of some little emotion, or, which I would prefer, give me back my old heart? I had become used to that in the course of five-and-twenty years, and if sometimes it were a little troublesome, yet it was a gay and a merry heart."

The wood-spirit laughed grimly and bitterly. "When you are dead, Peter Munk," he answered, "you shall no longer be without it; then you shall have your soft, sensitive heart again, and then you will feel whatever arises, be it joy or grief, but in this world it can never be yours any more. Well, Peter, you have indeed travelled; but in the manner in which you lived travelling could not be of any use to you. Settle yourself now somewhere in the forest, build a house, marry, increase your fortune; you only need employment, you were wearied because you were idle, and now you would lay all the blame on this innocent heart."

Peter perceived that Michael was right as to the punishment of idleness, and he devoted himself to making himself richer and richer. Michael presented him with another hundred thousand florins, and parted with him as his true friend. The report very soon spread in the Black Forest that charcoal-Peter Munk, or gambling Peter, had returned again, and much richer even than before.

Now all went on as formerly. When he was a beggar he was flung out of the door, but now when, on one Sunday afternoon, he made his appearance, every one shook him by the hand, praised his horse, asked him about his journey; and when he sat down again to play for hard cash with fat Ezekiel, he stood as high as ever in public estimation. He

did not now carry on the business of glass-making, but ostensibly traded in timber. His principal trade really was in corn and money. Half the people in the Black Forest became in debt to him by degrees; he lent money at ten per cent. or sold corn at three times its value to the poor who could not pay. He was now firm friends with the bailiff, and if any one could not pay Herr Peter Munk to the day, the bailiff would ride out with his officials, value the house and goods, sell them instantly and turn father, mother and children into the forest. At first this caused rich Peter some annoyance, for the poor people who were ruined besieged his door in numbers, the men entreated his forbearance, the women endeavoured to soften his stony heart, and the children moaned for a piece of bread; but when he had provided himself with a couple of good mastiffs, this "cat's-music," as he called it, quickly ceased, for he whistled and hounded on his dogs, and the poor people fled with cries. But his greatest encumbrance was the "Old Woman," who, however, was none other than Frau Munkin, Peter's mother. She had fallen into poverty and misery when his house and premises had been sold, and her son, when he returned rich, had no longer paid any attention to her Old, weak, and infirm, she now sometimes came to a tree in front of the house; further she never ventured, for once he had sent her away. It was grief to her to be obliged to live on the benevolence of other people because her own son had condemned her to a neglected old age. But his cold heart was never touched by the sight of the pale familiar features, by the imploring glances, by the withered outstretched hand, by the tottering form; and when, on Sunday evening, she would knock at the door, he would sulkily pull out a small coin, fold it in a piece of paper, and send it out by a servant. He then heard her trembling voice, as she spoke her thanks and wished that he might prosper in the world; he heard her glide coughing from the door, but he thought no more about her except that he had spent the money to no purpose.

At length Peter resolved upon marrying. He knew that any father in the whole Black Forest would willingly give him his daughter; but he was difficult to please; for he wished that, in this matter, every one should praise his good fortune and good sense.

He therefore rode throughout the whole forest, and looked now here, now there, but none of the fair maidens of the Black Forest seemed to him to be lovely enough. At length, after he had sought in vain in every dancing-room for the fairest of her sex, he heard one day that the most beautiful and virtuous girl in the whole forest was the daughter of a poor wood-cutter. She was living quietly and in seclusion, taking care of her father's house with skill and industry, and she never allowed herself to be seen at dances—not even at fair-time or Whitsuntide.

When Peter heard of this marvel of the forest, he resolved to pay his addresses to her, and rode to her hut, which had been pointed out to him. The father of the lovely Elizabeth received the grand gentleman with astonishment, and was still more amazed when he heard that it was the wealthy Herr Peter who wished to become his son-in-law.

He did not take long to consider, for he thought that all his poverty and anxiety would now come to an end. He agreed without even asking Elizabeth, and the good child was so docile that she became Frau Peter Munkin without making any opposition

But the poor girl did not fare so well as she had dreamed. She thought she understood her household duties thoroughly, yet she could not give satisfaction to Herr Peter. She was compassionate to the poor; and as her husband was rich, she thought that it could be no sin to give a penny to a poor beggar woman, or something to drink to an old man; but when Herr Peter saw her do this one day, he said in a rough voice, and with angry looks, "Why are you wasting my property on beggars and tramps? What did you bring into the house, that you should be giving away? The beggar's staff of your father would scarce suffice to warm up one supper,

and you throw money about as if you were a princess. If I catch you doing this again you shall feel the weight of my arm." The lovely Elizabeth wept in her own room over the harsh disposition of her husband, and she often wished that she were at home in her father's poor hut rather than living with the wealthy, but stingy and hard-hearted Peter. Oh! if she had known that he had a heart of marble, and that he was not able to love her nor any one, truly she would not have been surprised. But now, whenever she was sitting at the door and a beggar man passed and took off his hat and began his moan, she would shut her eyes tightly that she might not see his misery, and clench her hands firmly lest she should involuntarily put it into her pocket and bring out a copper coin Thus it came to pass that the beautiful Elizabeth was decried throughout the whole forest, and that she was said to be even more stingy than Peter Munk.

One day Frau Elizabeth was sitting in front of her house spinning and humming a song, for she felt gay because the weather was fine and because Herr Peter had ridden out into the fields. It happened that a little old man was passing that way, carrying a large heavy sack, and already in the distance she could hear him panting. Frau Elizabeth looked at him with compassion, and thought that so old and so small a man ought not to be thus heavily laden.

Meanwhile the little man approached, staggering and out of breath; and when just opposite to Frau Elizabeth, he almost fell beneath the weight of the sack. "Oh! have pity on me, lady, and give me just one drink of water," said the little man. "I cannot go any further and am fainting away!"

"But at your age you ought not to carry such heavy burdens," said Frau Elizabeth.

"That would be very true if I were not, by reason of my poverty, obliged to go on errands to gain my livelihood," replied he. "Ah! so rich a lady as you does not know how poverty presses, nor how grateful is something cool to drink in such a heat."

When she heard this she hastened into the house, took a pitcher from the shelf and filled it with water; but when she came back, and was within a few steps of the little man, and saw how he was sitting on the sack in such sorrow and misery, she felt deep compassion for him; and remembering that her husband was not in the house, she put the pitcher of water on one side, took a cup and filled it with wine, placed a large piece of rye bread on it and brought them to the old man.

"Here, a draught of wine will do you more good than water at your great age," said she, "but do not drink it too quickly, and eat the bread with it."

The little man looked at her in astonishment till large tears stood in his eyes. He drank it, and then said, "I am old, but I have seen very few people who are so full of pity and who know how to bestow their gifts so generously and so heartily as you, Frau Elizabeth. You will prosper for this even on earth. Such a heart does not remain unrewarded."

"No! and she shall receive her reward on the spot," cried an awful voice. She looked round, and there was Herr Peter with a face as red as fire. "And you pour out my best wine for beggars and my own cup you put to the lips of tramps. Yes, take your reward."

Frau Elizabeth started to her feet and implored forgiveness, but the heart of stone knew no pity; he swung the whip that he held in his hand and struck her so heavily with the ebony handle on her beautiful forehead that she sank lifeless into the arms of the old man.

When Peter saw this he seemed to repent of the deed on the spot; he stooped down to see whether some life did not remain in her, but the little man said, in a well-known voice, "Do not trouble yourself, charcoal-Peter. She was the fairest and loveliest flower in the Black Forest, but you have crushed her and she will never bloom again." The blood left Peter's cheeks and he said, "Then it is you, Herr Treasure-keeper. Well, what is done was destined to be so.

But I hope you will not denounce me to justice as a murderer."

"Miserable wretch," replied the little glass-man, "how would it benefit me to bring your mortal body to the gallows? It is not earthly judgment that you fear, but another and far more severe, since you have sold your soul to the Evil one."

"And if I did sell my heart," cried Peter, "no one is to blame for it but you, and your deceitful gifts, you treacherous spirit! You led me on to destruction, you drove me to seek help from another, and on you lies the whole responsibility."

But he had scarcely uttered these words when the little glass-man began to grow and increase in his proportions, becoming tall and large; his eyes grew as big as a plate and his mouth like a heated oven from which flames burst forth. Peter threw himself on his knees, and his stony heart did not protect him from trembling like an aspen in every limb. The wood-spirit seized him by the neck with claws like those of a vulture whirled him round as the wind does a dead leaf and threw him to the ground till his ribs cracked again.

"Worm of the earth!" he cried in a voice which rolled like thunder, "I could annihilate you if I would, for you have sinned against the lord of the forest, but for the sake of this dead lady who gave me food and drink I will grant you eight days' respite. If you do not return into the right path I will come again and grind your bones to powder and you shall go hence in your sins."

It was evening when some men who were passing discovered rich Peter Munk lying on the ground. They turned him over and tried to see whether any life were left in him, but for a long time their efforts to restore him were in vain. At length one of them went into the house, brought out some water and sprinkled him with it. Peter then drew a long breath, groaned, and opened his eyes. He looked about him for some time and then asked for Frau Elizabeth, but no one had seen her. He thanked the men for their help, went

quietly into the house and looked all around, but Frau Elizabeth was neither in the cellar nor upstairs, and that which he had deemed a fearful dream proved a bitter reality. Now that he was so completely alone, strange thoughts came into his mind, he was afraid of nothing, for his heart was still so cold; but when he thought of the death of his wife, thoughts of his own death followed, and how he must pass into another world heavily laden with the tears of the poor, with the thousand curses which had been unable to soften his heart, with his woes of the miserable creatures upon whom he had bounded his dogs; laden with the silent despair of his mother, with the blood of fair good Elizabeth; and, even in this world, what satisfaction would he be able to give to the old man, her father, when he should come and ask, "Where is my daughter, thy wife?" How would he bear the questions of that Other to Whom all forests, seas, mountains, and the life of man belong? He was tormented even at night in his dreams, and at every moment he was awoke by a sweet voice which cried to him, "Peter, get a warm heart for yourself." Then when he woke he would quickly close his eyes again, for the voice seemed to be that of Frau Elizabeth, who was giving him this admonition.

On the following day he went to the inn to distract his thoughts, and there he met fat Ezekiel. He seated himself beside him. They talked of this thing and that; of the fine weather, of the taxes, of the war, and at last of death, and how here and there one and another had died so suddenly. Peter then asked the fat man what he thought of death and of what came after it. Ezekiel replied that the body was buried, but that the soul either went up to heaven or down to hell.

"Then is the heart buried also?" inquired Peter anxiously.

"Yes, certainly; that is also buried."

"But suppose one has not one's heart?" continued Peter.

At these words Ezekiel looked at him with horror, "What

do you mean by that? Are you jesting with me? Do you mean to say that I have no heart? "

"Oh, heart enough; as firm as a stone," replied Peter.

Ezekiel stared at him with wonder, looked round to see whether any one was within hearing, and then said, "How do you know that? But perhaps your own has left off throbbing? "

"It throbs no more—at least not here in my own breast," answered Peter Munk. "But tell me, since you know now what I mean, what will happen to our hearts? "

"Why should this concern you, friend? " said Ezekiel, smiling. "You have plenty to live on in this world, and that is enough. This is exactly one thing that is so convenient with our cold hearts, that no feeling of fear troubles us at thoughts of death."

"Very true; but still one thinks; and although I do not know what fear is, I remember well how much I dreaded hell when I was a little innocent boy."

"Well, nothing good will come to us," said Ezekiel. "I once asked a schoolmaster about it, and he told me that after death men's hearts were weighed to see how heavy they had become through sin. The light hearts rose, the heavy sank, and I fancy our stones will be a good weight."

"Certainly so," said Peter, "and I often feel uncomfortable that my heart should be so unconcerned and indifferent when I think of such things."

Thus they conversed; but on the next night, Peter five or six times heard the familiar voice whisper in his ear, "Peter, get a warm heart for yourself." He felt no penitence for having killed his wife, but when he said to the servants that she had gone on a journey, he always thought, "And whither may she have travelled? "

Six days thus passed, and at night he always heard this voice, and always thought of the forest-spirit and of his fearful threat; but on the seventh morning he sprang up from his bed and exclaimed, "Now then, I will see whether

I can procure a warmer heart; for the senseless stone in my breast makes life wearisome and desolate."

He put on his best clothes, hastily mounted his horse and rode to the pine-grove.

In the pine-grove, at the spot where the trees grew thickly, he dismounted, made his horse fast, and went with rapid steps to the summit of the hill, and as he stood before the large pine tree he began his incantation.

Hearken, thou for ages past
Master of the forest vast,
Thou, whose treasured gold is laid
Deep beneath the pine-tree's shade,
Thou whose elfin form is shown
To the Sunday-born alone.

The little glass-man came out; not with a kind and friendly aspect as before, but grave and sorrowful. He wore a little coat of black glass, and a long crape streamer fluttered from his hat. Peter well knew for whom he mourned.

"What would you of me, Peter Munk?" he asked in a hollow voice.

"I have still one wish left, Herr Treasure-keeper," answered Peter with downcast eyes.

"Can hearts of stone wish, then?" said the other. "You have everything that you can need for your evil disposition, and I shall not readily grant your wish."

"But you promised me three wishes, and I have still one left."

"I can deny it if it is foolish," replied the forest-spirit. "However I will hear what you would say."

"Then take the dead stone from me and give me my living heart," said Peter.

"Was it I who made the bargain with you?" said the little glass-man. "Am I Dutch Michael, who has tons of wealth and cold hearts? Go, you must search for your heart with him."

"Alas, he will never give it back!" answered Peter.

"Bad as you are you make me sorry for you," said the little man after a moment's reflection. "Since your wish is not a foolish one I cannot at least refuse my help. Listen, then. You can never obtain your heart by force, only by stratagem; that may perhaps not be difficult, for Michael is still but stupid Michael, although he is so wise in his own eyes. Go then straight to him and do as I tell you."

He now instructed Peter in all that he should do, and gave him a little cross of pure glass.

"He cannot deprive you of life, and he will let you go free if you hold this to him and pray to it; then, if you receive what you desire, come back to me at this spot."

Peter Munk took the little cross, imprinted all the words on his memory and proceeded to Dutch Michael's dwelling. He called him by name three times, and immediately the giant stood before him.

"So you have killed your wife," the giant exclaimed with a hideous laugh, "and it was well done; for she would have given all your fortune to the beggars. However, you must go out of the country for a time; for when it is found out there will be a noise made about it. I suppose you need money, and are come to seek it?"

"You have guessed rightly," answered Peter, "and a great deal this time, for it is a long way to America."

Michael went first and conducted Peter into his house. There he opened a chest in which was a store of money, and took out whole rouleaus of gold. Whilst he was counting them out on the table, Peter said.

"You are a rogue, Michael, for you have deceived me; I wished to have stone instead of my heart, and that you should have my heart."

"And is it not so?" asked Michael in astonishment. "Can you feel your heart? Is it not as cold as ice? Have you any sensation of fear, or of grief, or of repentance?"

"You have only made my heart stand still; it is within my breast the same as formerly, and so is that of Ezekiel,

who told me you had deceived us. You are not the man who could tear the heart out of one's breast without danger and without our knowing it—to do that you would be obliged to use enchantment."

"But I assure you," cried Michael sullenly, "that you and Ezekiel and all the rich people who deal with me have these cold hearts, and I have their real hearts here in my room."

"And how glibly falsehood comes from your tongue!" smiled Peter. "You would impose upon any one. Do you think that in my travels I have not met with similar artifices by the dozen? The hearts here in your room are all imitations in wax. You are a wealthy fellow, I admit, but an enchanter you are not."

The giant grew furious and burst open the door of the room. "Come in, and read the labels. There, that is Peter Munk's heart! Do you see how it throbs? Could one make that of wax?"

"And yet it is wax," answered Peter: "a real heart does not beat like that. And I have mine still within my breast. No, you cannot use enchantment."

"But I will prove it to you," cried the other angrily. "You shall feel for yourself that this is your heart"

He took it, tore open Peter's jacket, took the stone out of his breast and showed it to him. Then he took the heart, breathed on it, and put it carefully in its proper place. Peter immediately felt how it throbbed and how he was able again to rejoice thereat.

"How do you feel now?" asked Michael, smiling.

"Assuredly you are quite right," answered Peter, taking his little cross carefully out of his pocket, "I could not have believed that such a thing could have been done."

"Was it not true? and true that I can use enchantment? But come, now I will put the stone back for you.

"Softly, Herr Michael!" cried Peter, retreating a step and holding the little cross towards him. "Mice can be

caught with bacon, and this time you are the person deceived." And immediately he began to pray in the first words that he remembered.

Michael now became gradually smaller and smaller, fell down and wriggled about like a worm, sighing and groaning, whilst all the hearts that were around beat and throbbed till the sound was like that in a watch-maker's shop. Peter was afraid and began to feel very uncomfortable; he ran out of the room and out of the house; and, urged forward by alarm, he climbed up the wall of rock, for he heard how Michael had risen and how he was stamping and sending imprecations after him. When he reached the top he ran towards the pine-grove. A fearful storm now arose; the lightning played around him right and left, rending the trees, but he arrived safely within the territory of the little glass-man.

His heart throbbed with joy—joy that it was able to throb. He now looked back with horror on his past life as on the storm which had desolated the beautiful forest behind him. He thought of Frau Elizabeth, his good and beautiful wife, whom he had killed from avarice; he appeared to himself to be an outcast among men; and when he reached the hill belonging to the little glass-man he was weeping violently.

The treasure-keeper was seated under the pine tree smoking his pipe, but he looked more cheerful than before.

"Why are you weeping, charcoal-Peter?" he asked. "Have you recovered your heart? Is that cold stone still within your breast?"

"Alas, sir," sighed Peter, "when I bore within me that cold heart of stone I never wept; my eyes were as dry as the country is in July; but now my old heart is almost broken on account of what I have done. I have hurried my debtors into misery, I have set my dogs at the poor and—— But you yourself know how my whip fell on that beautiful forehead.

"Peter, you have been a great sinner," said the litle man, "money and idleness were your ruin, so that your heart became turned to stone and no longer knew either joy or

suffering, penitence or pity. But repentance atones for much; and if I were sure that your past life were really a source of grief to you, I might be able to do something for you."

"I wish for nothing more," said Peter, drooping his head mournfully: "all is over with me now, life has no joys left for me. What should I do all alone in the world? My mother can never forgive me for my conduct to her, and perhaps I have brought her to the grave; monster that I am! And Elizabeth, my wife—— Rather kill me, Herr Treasure-keeper, and put an end to my miserable existence at once."

"Well," replied the little man, "if you wish for nothing else you can have that, for I have my axe at hand." He then quietly took his little pipe out of his mouth, and replaced it in his pocket. He rose slowly and went behind the pine tree.

Peter sat weeping on the grass. His life was no longer of any value to him, and he patiently awaited his death stroke. In a few minutes he heard gentle steps behind him and thought, "Now he is coming."

"Look up once more, Peter Munk," cried the little man.

Peter dashed the tears from his eyes, looked round and saw—his mother and Elizabeth, his wife, who were gazing at him tenderly.

He sprang up joyfully. "Then you are not dead, Elizabeth? And you also are here, mother, and have you forgiven me?

"They will forgive you," said the little glass-man, "because you feel true repentance, and all shall be forgotten. Now go home to your father's hut and be a charcoal-burner as formerly. If you are a true and honest man, you will be an honour to your trade, and your neighbours will love and respect you more than if you had tons of gold."

With these words the little glass-man took leave of them.

The three praised and blessed him, and then went home.

The magnificent house of the wealthy Peter was no longer standing; the lightning had struck it and burnt all his treasures; but his paternal hut was not far distant. They turned their steps thither, and the great loss Peter had sustained did not distress them. But how astonished they were when they reached the hut. It had become a beautiful farm-house, and everything in it was simple but neat and good.

"The kind little glass-man has done this," cried Peter.

"How beautiful!" cried Frau Elizabeth. "And all here looks to me so much more comfortable than in the large house with our numerous servants.

From this time forth Peter Munk became an industrious, true-hearted man. He was contented with that which he had, and followed his business cheerfully; and thus it happened that, prospering by his own exertions, he became beloved and respected throughout the whole forest. He no more quarrelled with Frau Elizabeth, he honoured his mother, and relieved the poor who knocked at his door.

When, after a year and a day, Frau Elizabeth presented him with a handsome boy, Peter went to the pine-grove and repeated his incantation But the little glass-man did not show himself.

"Herr Treasure-keeper," cried Peter aloud, "pray listen to me; I wish for nothing but to ask you to be the god-father to my little son."

Still there was no answer, only a breath of wind sighed through the pines, making some cones to fall down on the grass.

"Then, since you will not allow yourself to be seen, I will take these with me as a remembrance," cried Peter, and he put the cones into his pocket and went home.

But when he reached home and took off his Sunday jacket, and his mother turned the pockets inside out before putting it by in the chest, four grand rolls of money fell out, and when they opened them they were all good new thalers, not one

bad coin among them. And this was the godfather's present from the man of the pine forest to little Peter.

Thus they lived on quietly and happily; and often in after years when Peter Munk had become grey he would say, "It is better to be content with a little than to have gold and wealth and a 'COLD HEART.'"

FRIEDRICH GERSTÄCKER

(1816–1872)

GERMELSHAUSEN

(Translated by C. W. Bell, M.A.)

I

In the autumn of the year 184– a strapping young fellow, knapsack on back and stick in hand, was walking with slow and easy stride along the broad high-road that leads up from Marisfeld to Wichtelhausen.

He was not one of those journeyman artizans [1] who travel about from place to place seeking work; any one could see that at the first glance, even if the small neatly made leather portfolio which he carried strapped on his knapsack had not betrayed his calling. There was certainly no denying the fact that he was an artist.

His black, broad-brimmed hat cocked jauntily on one side, his long, fair, curly hair, his downy beard, full but youthful still—everything announced it, even the somewhat threadbare black velvet jacket, which seemed likely to be a little too warm for him on this bright, warm morning. He had unbuttoned it, and the white shirt underneath—for he wore no waistcoat—was but loosely held together round his neck by a black silk scarf.

[1] In Germany from the fourteenth to the middle of the nineteenth century, journeyman artizans were compelled to "travel"—that is to say, they were obliged to visit the more important places where their trade was plied, in order to make use at home of the knowledge thus acquired.

He might have been about a mile distant from Marisfeld when the bell of the village church rang out, and he halted, leaning upon his stick and listening intently to the full tones of the bell, which sounded wondrously sweet to him across the breezes.

The sounds had long since died away, and yet he still stood there gazing dreamily out over the hill-slopes. His heart was at home with his loved ones in the dear little village among the Taunus [1] mountains, with his mother and his sisters, and it almost seemed as if a tear was like to spring to his eye.

But his light and merry heart would not suffer the intrusion of sad and melancholy thoughts. He only took off his hat, waved a loving, smiling greeting in the direction in which he knew his home lay, and then, gripping his stout stick more firmly, he gaily stepped out along the road, continuing the journey he had already begun.

Meanwhile the sun was beating down with considerable warmth upon the broad, monotonous highway, which was covered with a thick layer of dust; and our traveller had already for some time been casting glances to right and left to see if he could anywhere discover some pleasanter footpath.

At one point, indeed, a road did branch off to the right, but it looked to him unpromising, and besides it would lead him too far out of his way; so he stuck to his original track a little longer, until he at length came to a limpid mountain stream, across which he could discern the ruins of an old stone bridge.

Away on the other side ran a grassy path, leading farther into the valley; so, with no definite purpose in view—for he was only passing through the beautiful Werra [2] valley

[1] This thickly wooded range extends, with its offshoots, between the Rhine, the Main, and the Lahn.

[2] The Werra, one of the two main streams which join to form the Weser, rises in the Thuringian Forest. The Werra valley is situated in Hessen-Nassau.

to enrich his portfolio—he crossed the brook dry-shod by leaping from one great stone to another, and so reached the close-cropped meadow on the other side, where he advanced rapidly on the springy turf under the shadow of the thick alder-bushes, well content with the change.

"Now I have the advantage," he said to himself with a laugh, "of not knowing whither I am bound. There is no tiresome sign-post here telling one miles beforehand what is the name of the next village, and invariably giving the wrong distance. However do people in these parts measure their miles, I should like to know!

"How wonderfully quiet it is in this valley! To be sure, on Sundays farmers have nothing to do out of doors, and since they have to walk behind their plough or by their cart the whole week, they don't care much about going for a walk when Sunday comes; they first of all make up for their arrears of sleep in church during the morning, and after dinner stretch their legs under the table in the tavern. Tavern! h'm, a glass of beer wouldn't be such a bad thing in this heat; but until I can get it this clear stream will quench my thirst just as well."

And with that he flung off knapsack and hat, knelt down at the water-side, and drank to his heart's content.

Somewhat cooled by his drink, his glance fell on an old, strangely gnarled willow tree, which he rapidly sketched with practised hand; and then, completely rested and refreshed, he took up his knapsack again and continued his way, regardless as to where it would lead him.

He had wandered on thus for perhaps an hour or so, otting down in his sketch-book here a crag, there a peculiar clump of alder-bushes, or again a knotty oak-branch; the sun had meanwhile mounted higher and higher, and he had just made up his mind to quicken his steps in order at least not to miss his dinner in the next village, when before him in the valley, sitting close to the brook and by an old stone, on which perhaps in times gone by there had

stood a sacred shrine, he caught sight of a peasant girl, who was gazing down the road along which he came.

As he was hidden by the alders, he had been able to see her before she saw him; but following the bank of the stream, he had hardly passed beyond the bushes which had hitherto concealed him from her sight when she leapt to her feet and flew toward him with a cry of pleasure.

Arnold, as the young painter was called, stood amazed, and was soon aware that a beautiful girl of hardly seventeen years, dressed in a peculiar but extremely pretty peasant's costume, was running up to him with outstretched arms.

Arnold of course saw at once that she had mistaken him for some one else, and that this joyful greeting was not meant for him; and the girl no sooner recognised him than she stood stock-still with horror, turned pale at first and then red all over, and finally said with shy embarrassment:

"Do not be offended, stranger! I—I thought——"

"That it was your sweetheart, my dear child, didn't you?" laughed the young man. "And now you are vexed that a different person, an uninteresting stranger, has met you! Don't be angry because I am not he."

"Ah, how can you say such things?" said the girl in a distressed whisper. "Why should I be angry?—oh! but if you only knew how delighted I was!"

"Then he certainly does not deserve that you should wait any longer for him," said Arnold, who now for the first time noticed the truly wonderful charm of the graceful peasant girl. "Were I in his place, you would not have had to wait for me in vain for a single moment."

"You do say such strange things," said the girl, abashed. "If he could have come he would certainly be here by now. Perhaps he is ill, or—even dead," she added slowly, and with a sigh that came from the depths of her heart.

"And has he let you have no news of himself all this time?"

"No, all this long, long time."

"Then his home is perhaps a long way from here?"

"A long way? Why, yes; quite a great distance from here," said the girl. "In Bischofsroda."

"Bischofsroda?" cried Arnold. "I spent four weeks there only recently, and I know every child in the whole village. What is his name?"

"Heinrich—Heinrich Vollgut," said the girl shyly; "the mayor's son in Bischofsroda."

"H'm," mused Arnold, "I was in and out of the mayor's house, but *his* name was Bauerling, as far as I know, and I never heard the name of Vollgut in the whole village."

"Probably you didn't know all the people there," argued the girl, and over the sorrowful expression which clouded her sweet face there stole a soft, roguish smile, which became her as well and much better than her previous melancholy.

"Well, but from Bischofsroda," said the young man, "you can get here over the mountains easily in two hours, at most in three."

"And yet he is not here," said the girl, sighing deeply again, "though he promised me so faithfully."

"Then he'll come sure enough," Arnold assured her with hearty conviction; "for once any one has given you a promise, he must surely have a heart of stone if he went back on his word—and that I am sure your Heinrich has not got."

"No," she answered resolutely; "but now I cannot wait any longer for him, as I have to be home for dinner, or else Father will scold me."

"And where is your home?"

"Straight down there in the valley. Hark! there's the bell; they are just coming out of church."

Arnold listened, and at no great distance off he could hear the slow pealing of a bell; but the sound came to

him not deep and full, but sharp and discordant, and when he turned his eyes toward the spot it seemed to him almost as if a thick mountain mist lay over that part of the valley.

"Your bell is cracked," he laughed; "it doesn't ring true."

"Yes, I know that," answered the girl calmly; "it has not a pleasant sound, and we should have had it recast long ago, but we are always short of money and time, for hereabouts there are no bell-casters. Yet, what does it matter? We know it all right, and we know what it means when it rings—so even though it is cracked it serves its purpose."

"And what is the name of your village?"

"Germelshausen."

"And can I get to Wichtelhausen from there?"

"Quite easily; by the footpath it takes hardly half an hour—perhaps, indeed, not so much, if you put your best foot forward."

"Then I'll go with you through the village, sweetheart, and if you have a good inn in the place I'll have my dinner there too."

"The inn is only too good," said the maiden with a sigh, as she cast a glance backward to see if her expected lover might not yet be coming.

"Can any inn be too good?"

"For the farmer, yes," said the girl gravely, as she walked slowly by his side along the valley. "Of an evening after his work he still has much to do in the house, and this he neglects if he sits in the public-house till late at night."

"But I, at any rate, have nothing more to neglect to-day."

"Yes, with townfolk it is rather different: they don't do anything, and consequently haven't got much to neglect either. Yet the farmer has to earn bread for them."

"Well, not exactly so," said Arnold with a laugh. "He has to grow it, I grant you, but we have to earn it for our-

selves; and a hard job it is too, many a time, for what the farmer does he sees that he is well paid for it."

"But you don't work, anyhow."

"Why not, pray?"

"Your hands don't look like it."

"Then I will show you at once how I work and what I work at," laughed Arnold. "Just you sit down on that flat stone under the old lilac tree. . . ."

"And what am I to do there?"

"Just sit down," cried the young painter, who threw off his knapsack and took out his sketch-book and pencil.

"But I must go home."

"I shall be done in five minutes. I should very much like to take a reminder of you away into the world with me; even your Heinrich will have no objection to that!"

"A reminder of me? What a funny man you are!"

"I will take your portrait away with me."

"You are a painter, then?"

"Yes."

"What a lucky thing! Then you might set to work and touch up the pictures in Germelshausen church; they look so very poor and shabby."

"What is your name?" was Arnold's next question. He had meanwhile opened his portfolio and was rapidly sketching in the girl's charming features.

"Gertrud."

"And what is your father?"

"The mayor of the village. If you are a painter, you must not go to the inn either; I will take you straight home with me, and after dinner you can talk over the whole matter with father."

"Oh, the pictures in the church?" said Arnold laughing.

"Of course," said the girl gravely; "and then you must stay with us a long, long time until—until our day comes again and the pictures are finished."

"Well, we'll talk about that later, Gertrud," said the young painter, busily plying his pencil the while; "but won't your Heinrich be angry if I am often—very often with you, and if I talk with you a good deal?"

"Heinrich?" said she. "Oh, he won't come now."

"Not to-day, no; but perhaps to-morrow."

"No," said Gertrud, quite calmly; "as he wasn't there by eleven o'clock, he will stay away until our day comes again."

"Your day? What do you mean by that?"

The girl looked at him with wide-open, earnest eyes, but gave no answer to his question, and her gaze turning to the clouds floating away high over their heads fastened upon them with a peculiar expression of pain and melancholy.

Gertrud's beauty at this moment was truly the beauty of an angel, and Arnold forgot all else in the interest which he was taking in the completion of her picture. Nor had he much more time left. The girl suddenly stood up, and tossing a kerchief over her head to shield her from the sun's rays, she said:

"Go I must; the day is so short, and they are expecting me at home."

But Arnold had finished his little picture, and indicating with a few bold strokes the folds of her dress, he held out the sketch to her and said:

"Have I caught your likeness?"

"It is myself!" gasped Gertrud, almost in fright.

"Well, who else could it be?" laughed Arnold.

"And do you wish to keep the picture and take it away with you?" asked the girl shyly, almost wistfully.

"Why, certainly I do," cried the young man, "and then when I am far, far away from here I shall think of you hard, and often."

"But will my Father allow that?"

"Allow me to think of you? Is he capable of forbidding me to do so?"

"No—but—to take the picture away with you—out into the world?"

"He can't hinder me, sweetheart," said Arnold tenderly; "but would you yourself hate to know that it was in my possession?"

"I? No!" was the girl's answer after short reflexion; "if only—but I must ask Father about it."

"What a silly child you are!" said the young painter with a laugh; "even a princess would have no objection to an artist securing a sketch of her features for himself. No harm can come to you from it. But please don't run off like that, you wild creature; I am coming with you, you know—or do you want to leave me behind without my dinner? Have you forgotten about the church pictures?"

"Oh, yes, the pictures," said the girl, standing still and waiting for him; but Arnold, who had quickly tied up his portfolio again, was by her side in a moment, and they both continued their way toward the village far quicker than before.

The village, however, was much nearer than Arnold had supposed from the sound of the cracked bell, for what the young man from afar had taken for an alder-grove, proved to be, on their nearer approach, a row of fruit trees enclosed by a hedge. Closely hidden behind these, yet surrounded on the north and north-east by broad fields, lay the old village with its low church-tower and its smoke-blackened cottages.

Here, too, it was that the pair first struck a firm, well-laid street, planted on either side with fruit trees. But over the village lowered a thick mist which Arnold had already perceived from afar, and it dimmed the bright sunshine, which fell upon the grey, old, weather-beaten roofs with a weird and yellowish light.

But Arnold scarcely had eyes for this. Gertrud, stepping out by his side, had meekly slipped her hand in his as they

came to the first houses, and clasping it in her own she turned with him into the next street.

A strange feeling thrilled the lusty youth at the touch of her warm hand, and almost involuntarily his eyes sought to meet those of the young maiden. But Gertrud did not look in his direction; with eyes fixed modestly on the ground, she conducted her guest to her father's house, and Arnold's attention, too, was at length taken up with the villagers he met, who all passed him by in silence and without a word of greeting.

He could not help noticing this at first, for in all the neighbouring villages it would have been deemed almost a crime not to offer a stranger at least a "Good day" or a "God bless you" Here no one thought of such a thing, and, just as in any large town, the people either passed by in silence and without showing any interest, or else stood here and there and looked after them; but no one spoke a word to them—not one of all the passers-by gave a greeting even to the girl.

And how strange the old houses looked, with their pointed gables ornamented with carved work, and their hard thatched roofs weather-worn and grey; and though it was Sunday no window was polished bright, and the round pane set in leaden frames looked tarnished and dim, and showed on their dull surface shimmering rainbow colours.

Here and there a window would open as they walked by, and pleasant-faced girls or elderly worthy matrons would peep out. The curious dress of the people struck him also, differing essentially as it did from that of the villages in the vicinity. And besides all this an almost soundless stillness reigned everywhere so that Arnold, to whom this silence at last became oppressive, said to his companion:

"Do you observe Sunday in your village so strictly that people when they meet one another haven't even a word of greeting to utter? If one didn't hear a dog barking now

and then or a cock crowing, one might really think the whole place dumb and dead."

"It is dinner-time," said Gertrud quietly, "and people are not inclined to talk then; this evening you will find them all the noisier."

"Thank Heaven!" exclaimed Arnold, "there are at least some children yonder playing in the street. I had begun to feel quite uncanny; I can tell you they spend Sunday quite differently in Bischofsroda."

"There's my father's house," said Gertrud in a low voice.

"But I can't thrust myself in upon him thus unexpectedly at dinner-time. I might be an unwelcome intruder, and I like to have friendly faces round me at meals. So show me rather where the inn is, my child, or let me find it myself, for probably Germelshausen is no exception to the rule of other villages. Generally the public-house is quite close to the church, and if you take the church-tower to guide you you can't go far wrong."

"There you are right; that is exactly the case with us," said Gertrud quietly; "but they expect us already at home, and you need have no fear of getting an unfriendly reception."

"Expect *us*? ah, you mean yourself and your Heinrich? Yes, Gertrud, if you would take me to-day in his place, then I would stay with you—until—until you yourself should tell me to go away again."

He had spoken these last words in such feeling tones, almost against his will, the while gently pressing the hand which still held his, that Gertrud suddenly stopped, looked at him out of her big, grave eyes, and said:

"Would you really wish that?"

"A thousand times yes," cried the young painter, utterly carried away by the girl's wonderful beauty. But Gertrud made no further answer, and pursuing her way as if she was pondering over the words of her companion, she at

length came to a halt in front of a tall house, which was approached by a flight of broad, stone steps protected by iron railings. Speaking in her former shy and timid manner she resumed:

"This is where I live, kind sir, and if it would please you, come in with me to my father, who will no doubt be proud to see you at his table."

II

Before Arnold could return any answer to this invitation the mayor himself appeared in the doorway at the top of the steps, and a window was thrown open, revealing the kindly face of an old lady who looked out and nodded to them.

"Why, Gertrud," exclaimed the farmer, "what a long time you have stayed out to-day, and look what a smart young fellow she has brought back with her!"

"My dear sir!"

"Please, no ceremony on the steps! The dumplings are ready; come in, or they'll get hard and cold."

"But that's not Heinrich," cried the old lady from the window. "Now, didn't I always say that he would never come back again?"

"All right, Mother, all right," said the mayor, "this one will do very well instead"; and holding out his hand to the stranger he went on: "A hearty welcome to Germelshausen, young gentleman, wherever the lass may have picked you up. And now come in to dinner and fall to to your heart's content; anything else we can talk of later."

He left the young painter no possible further chance to make any excuses, but vigorously shaking his hand, which Gertrud had released as soon as he had set foot on the stone steps, he took his arm with familiar kindness and conducted him into the spacious living-room.

Although he was well acquainted with the habits of the German farmer, who shuts himself off from every breath of fresh air in his room, and not unfrequently, even in summer, keeps up a fire so as to produce the broiling heat he so delights in, yet what was most noticeable to Arnold at once was the musty, earthy atmosphere which pervaded the house.

The narrow entrance hall was likewise far from inviting. The plaster had fallen from the walls and appeared to have just been hastily swept to one side. The single dim window at the back of the hall hardly admitted the meagre light, and the stairs which led to the upper storey looked old and out of repair.

Little time, however, was given him to observe all this, for in the very next moment his hospitable host threw open the door of the parlour, and Arnold saw himself in a low but broad and spacious room, which was airy and fresh, with white sand sprinkled over the floor, and which with its large table in the centre spread with a snow-white cloth contrasted pleasantly with the rest of the rather dilapidated arrangements of the house.

Besides the old lady, who now had shut the window and moved her chair up to the table, there were also sitting in the corner a few red-cheeked children; and a buxom peasant-woman, who also was wearing a costume utterly different from that of the neighbouring villages, was just opening the door to admit the maid who came in with a large dish.

And now the dumplings were smoking on the board and every one made for the chairs to partake of the welcome meal; but no one sat down, and the children, as it seemed to Arnold, cast almost anxious eyes on their father.

The latter advanced to his chair, and leaning his arms upon it, stared dumbly, silently, even gloomily upon the ground. Was he praying? Arnold saw that he kept his lips firmly pressed while his right hand hung down

clenched by his side. In his features was no sign of prayer, only an obstinate yet irresolute defiance.

Gertrud then turned quietly to him and laid her hand on his shoulder, while the old lady stood speechless opposite to him, and looked at him with earnestly pleading eyes.

"Let us eat," growled the man, "it's no use, I fear"; and pushing his chair aside, nodded to his guest, dropped into his seat, and seizing the huge ladle served out helpings all round.

To Arnold the man's whole behaviour was almost uncanny, nor could he feel comfortable amid the depression shown by the others. But the mayor was not the man to eat his dinner to the accompaniment of melancholy thoughts. In answer to his rap on the table the maid came in again bearing bottles and glasses, and with the rich old wine which he now poured out a very different and more cheerful state of mind soon prevailed among the company round the table.

The glorious beverage ran through Arnold's veins like liquid fire; never in his life had he tasted anything like it. Gertrud drank some too, and so did the old lady, who later seated herself at her spinning-wheel in the corner and in a low voice sang a little song of the merry life in Germelshausen. The mayor himself seemed a different being.

He now became as cheerful and jovial as earlier he had been morose and silent, and Arnold himself could not escape the influence of the rich wine.

He could not precisely tell how it came about, but the mayor had taken a violin in his hand and was playing a merry dance, and Arnold, with his arm about fair Gertrud's waist, whirled with her round the room so madly that he upset the spinning-wheel and the chair, bumped into the maid who was trying to carry away the dinner things, and cut all sorts of merry capers, so that the others almost died of laughter to see him.

Suddenly there was complete silence in the room, and

as Arnold looked round at the magistrate in astonishment, the latter pointed with his violin-bow out of the window, and then laid the instrument back again in the wooden case from which he had taken it. And Arnold perceived that outside in the street a coffin was being carried by.

Six men dressed in white shirts were bearing it upon their shoulders, and behind them, quite alone, walked an old man leading a little, fair-haired girl by the hand.

The old man walked along the street as one crushed with grief, but the little girl, who could hardly have been four years old, and probably had no idea who was lying in that black coffin, kept gaily nodding her head wherever she saw a face she knew, and laughed shrilly when two or three dogs scampered by and one of them ran up against the steps of the mayor's house and rolled over and over.

But the silence endured only as long as the coffin was in sight, and Gertrud drew up to the young man and said:

"Now rest a little while; you have been romping quite enough; otherwise, the heavy wine will get into your head more and more. Come, take your hat and let us go for a little walk together. By the time we get back it will be time to go to the inn, for there is a dance this evening."

"A dance? That's splendid," exclaimed Arnold, delighted; "I've come just at the right time. You'll give me the first dance, I hope, Gertrud?"

"Certainly, if you wish."

Arnold had already seized his hat and sketch-book.

"What do you want with the book?" asked the mayor.

"He sketches, Father," said Gertrud, "and he has already drawn me. Just have a look at the picture."

Arnold opened the sketch-book and held out the picture to her father.

The farmer looked at it quietly for a while without speaking

"And do you want to take that home with you?" he asked at length, "and perhaps frame it and hang it up in your room?"

"Why not, pray?"

"May he, Father?" asked Gertrud.

"If he does not stay with us," laughed the mayor, "I have no objection—but there's something wanting in the background."

"What?"

"Why, the funeral procession that passed a moment ago. Draw that on the paper, and you may take the picture with you."

"What! the funeral procession with Gertrud!"

"There's room enough," said the mayor obstinately; "you must put it in the sketch, or else I will not permit you to take away with you my lassie's portrait all by itself. In such solemn company no one can possibly think evil of it."

At this strange proposal to give the pretty maiden a funeral party as a guard of honour, Arnold laughingly shook his head. But the old man seemed to have made up his mind, and so, to humour him, he did as he wished. Later on he could quite easily rub out the dismal additional feature.

With practised hand he drew on the paper the figures that had just passed by, though only from memory, and the whole family crowded round him as he worked, and watched with evident astonishment the rapid completion of the drawing.

"There, have I been successful?" cried Arnold at length, jumping up from his chair and holding out the picture at arm's length.

"Splendidly!" nodded the mayor; "I should never have thought you could finish it so quickly. Now, that will do; out you go with the lassie and have a look at the village; it may be a long while before you have a chance

of seeing it again. Be back here by five o'clock sharp—we are having high jinks to-night and you must be there."

The musty room and the wine which had mounted to his head had begun to make Arnold feel heavy and oppressed. He longed to be out of doors, and a few minutes later he was striding along the street which led through the village, with fair Gertrud by his side.

As they made their way along there was not the same absence of noise as there had been before; children were playing in the road here and there, old people were sitting at their doors looking at them, and the whole place with its quaint ancient houses might have presented quite a pleasant appearance if only the sun had been able to pierce the thick brown smoke which hung like a cloud over the roofs.

"Is the moor or forest on fire hereabouts?" he asked the girl. "This sort of smoke does not hang over any other village and cannot come from the chimneys."

"It is earth-vapour," said Gertrud quietly; "but have you never heard of Germelshausen?"

"Never."

"That is strange, and yet the village is old, oh! so old."

"The houses look like it, at any rate, and the people too have such a curious way with them, and their speech sounds quite differently from that of places near at hand. You go very little outside your own village, I expect?"

"Very little," said Gertrud, curtly.

"And not a single swallow is left. They can't surely have flown away yet?"

"Oh, a long time ago," answered the girl apathetically; "in Germelshausen they never come now to build their nests. Perhaps they can't stand the earth-vapour."

"But surely you don't have that always?"

"Yes, always."

"Then that is the reason why your fruit trees bear no fruit, and yet in Marisfeld this year they had to prop up the branches, so fruitful has the season been."

Gertrud said not a word in answer, and walked on in silence by his side straight through the village until they came to the extreme limit. On the way she gave a kindly nod to a child here and there or spoke a low word or two with one of the young girls—maybe about the evening's dance and the dresses they were to wear.

And as they talked the girls cast sympathetic glances at the young painter, so that his heart warmed and saddened —he did not quite know why—and for all that he did not dare to ask Gertrud why it should be so.

They had now at length reached the last houses, and if it had been lively in the village itself, here at any rate everything was still and lonely and death-like. The gardens looked as if they had not been walked in for years and years; grass was growing in the pathways, and it seemed especially noticeable to the young stranger that not a single fruit tree bore a single bit of fruit.

At this point some men met them, going back home from outside the village, and at once Arnold recognised them as the funeral party returning. They moved noiselessly past them into the village again, and almost involuntarily the pair turned their steps to the graveyard.

Arnold tried now to cheer up his companion, who seemed to him so very serious, by telling her about other places where he had been and what the great outer world was like. She had never seen a railway, never even heard of one, and listened with attention and astonishment to his explanations.

Nor had she any knowledge of the electric telegraph, and she knew just as little about all the other more modern inventions; so that the young artist could not understand how it was possible that there should be still living in Germany human beings so secluded, so absolutely cut off

from the rest of the world and without the slightest connection with it.

Conversing thus they reached the cemetery, and here the young stranger was immediately struck by the old-world appearance of the stones and monuments, simple and plain though they were as a general rule.

"Here is an old, old stone," he said, bending down to the nearest one and with difficulty deciphering the scroll-work upon it. "Anna Maria Berthold, maiden name Stieglitz, born 16th December 1188, died 2nd December 1224."

"That is my mother," said Gertrud solemnly, and the big, crystal tears filled her eyes and slowly trickled down on to her bodice.

"Your mother, dear child?" said Arnold in astonishment; "your great-great-grandmother perhaps it might have been."

"No," said Gertrud, "my own mother. Father married again, and the one at home is my step-mother."

"But surely it says, died 1224?"

"What does the year matter?" said Gertrud mournfully; "it is sad enough to be thus parted from one's mother, and yet," she added sorrowfully under her breath, "perhaps it was well, very well that she was suffered to go to God beforehand."

Arnold bent down over the stone, shaking his head, and made a closer examination of the inscription, in case the first "2" in the date might be an "8," for in the old-time writing such a thing was not impossible, but the second "2" was exactly the same as the first, and it was as yet too soon to write 1884. Perhaps it was the stone-mason who had made the mistake, and the girl was so deep in her memories of the departed that he did not like to trouble her any further with questions that were perhaps displeasing to her.

He therefore left her by the gravestone before which she

had sunk to her knees and was silently praying, and proceeded to examine some other monuments, but all of them without exception bore dates of many hundred years back, even as far back as 930 and 900 A.D. No more recent gravestone could be discovered, and yet the dead were even now laid to rest in this place, as the latest fresh grave betokened.

From the low churchyard wall there was a splendid view of the old village, and Arnold quickly availed himself of the opportunity of making a sketch of it. But over this place also lay the strange fog, though toward the wood he could see the sunlight falling bright and clear on the mountain slopes.

Then from the village came the sound of the old cracked bell again, and Gertrud quickly rising from her knees and dashing the tears from her eyes, gently beckoned to the young man to follow her.

Arnold was quickly by her side.

"Now we must sorrow no more," she said with a smile, "the church bell is ringing the end of the service, and now for the dance. Up to the present you have no doubt imagined that the people of Germelshausen are nothing but kill-joys, but to-night you will think the contrary."

"But yonder is the church door," said Arnold, "and I can see nobody coming out."

"That is perfectly natural," laughed the girl, "for no one ever goes in, not even the priest. Only the old verger allows himself no rest, and still rings the service in and out."

"And do none of your people ever go to church?"

"No, neither to Mass nor to confession," said the girl quietly. "We have quarrelled with the Pope, who lives among foreigners, and has forbidden it until we return to obedience."

"Why, I've never heard of such a thing in all my life."

"Yes, it is a long time ago," said the girl carelessly.

"Look, there's the verger all alone coming out of church and shutting the door; he never goes to the inn of an evening either, but sits silent all by himself at home."

"And does the priest go?"

"I should think so, and he is the jolliest of them all. He does not take things to heart."

"And how has all this come about?" asked Arnold, who was amazed not so much at the facts he had heard as at the girl's simplicity.

"It's a long story," Gertrud said, "and the priest has written it all down in a big, thick book. If you are interested, and if you understand Latin, you may read all about it there."

"But," she added by way of warning, "don't speak of it when Father is by, for he doesn't like it. Look, here come the boys and girls out of doors already; I must hurry off home now and dress, for I should not like to be the last."

"And the first dance, Gertrud?"

"I dance it with you; you have my promise."

The two walked quickly back to the village, which was now all astir with life, very different from what it was in the morning. Laughing groups of young people were standing about on all sides; the girls were all dressed up for the festival, and the young fellows too were in their best clothes, while on the face of the inn, as they sped past, festoons of leaves were hanging from window to window, and formed a broad triumphal arch over the door.

Seeing that every one was tricked out most resplendently, Arnold was unwilling to mingle with the merry-makers dressed in his travelling garb; so he unbuckled his knapsack in the mayor's house, took out of it his smart suit, and had just completed his toilet when Gertrud knocked at the door and called him.

And what a picture of loveliness the girl looked now in her simple yet rich gown, and how cordially she asked him

to escort her, saying that her father and mother would not follow on till later!

"Yearning after her Heinrich cannot be depressing her spirits to any particular extent," was the youth's uppermost thought, as he drew her arm through his and passed with her to the ballroom through the gathering dusk. But he refrained from giving utterance to such thoughts, for a strange, a wonderful feeling thrilled his breast, and his own heart throbbed violently as he felt the girl's heart beating against his arm.

"To think that to-morrow I must depart," he sighed softly to himself. Although he had not intended it, his words reached the ears of his companion, and she said with a smile:

"Don't trouble about that; we shall be together longer —longer perhaps than you like."

"And would you be glad, Gertrud, if I stayed with you?" asked Arnold, and as he spoke he felt the blood surging in tumultuous waves over forehead and temples.

"Of course I should," said the young girl simply; "you are nice and kind, and Father likes you too, of that I'm sure, and—Heinrich hasn't come, you know," she added in an undertone and somewhat angrily.

"Suppose he came to-morrow?"

"To-morrow?" said Gertrud, looking at him gravely out of her great dark eyes; "between now and to-morrow lies a long, long night To-morrow! You will understand to-morrow what that word means. But to-day let us not speak of it," she said abruptly, yet pleasantly; "to-day is a holiday, to which we have looked forward so long, oh! so long, and do not let us spoil it by gloomy thoughts.

"Here we are at the place; the boys will stare a good deal when they see me bringing a new partner."

Arnold was about to make some reply to her, but his words were drowned by the noisy music which rolled out from within the ballroom. Strange tunes too were the

musicians playing, not one of which he recognised, and at first he was almost blinded by the flash of the many lights that sparkled before his eyes.

Gertrud led him into the centre of the hall, where a bevy of young peasant girls stood chatting together, and not till then did she leave him to himself so that, until the real business of the dance began, he might look about him a little and make the acquaintance of the other young men.

III

At the first moment Arnold felt ill at ease among these many strangers; moreover, their strange costume and their strange speech repelled him, and though the harsh, unwonted accents came sweetly from Gertrud's lips, yet they grated on his ear when pronounced by others. The young fellows were all friendly disposed toward him, however, and one of them approached him, took him by the hand, and said:

"You have done wisely, sir, in choosing to bide with us. We lead a merry life, and the interval passes quickly enough."

"What do you mean by the interval?" asked Arnold, astonished not so much at the expression as because the youth pronounced so firmly his conviction that he had chosen to make the village his home. "Do you mean that I shall come back here?"

"But do you wish to go away?" asked the young peasant sharply.

"To-morrow, yes, or the day after to-morrow; but I'll come back."

"To-morrow; oh!" laughed the youth; "then that's all right. Well, we'll talk more about it to-morrow. But now come and I'll show you how we enjoy ourselves, for if you really want to go away to-morrow, you might not after all get a chance of seeing the fun."

The others looked at each other and laughed knowingly, while the young peasant took Arnold by the hand and conducted him all over the house, which was now packed full of a crowd of merry-makers. First they passed through rooms wherein sat card-players with great heaps of money lying before them. Next they came to a bowling-alley, inlaid with shining flagstones.

In a third room ring-throwing and other games were being played, and the young girls tripped in and out laughing and singing and teasing the young men, till all of a sudden a flourish from the band, which up to now had been playing away merrily, gave the signal for the dance to commence, and Gertrud stood at Arnold's side and took his arm.

"Come, we must not be the last," said the lovely girl, "for as the mayor's daughter it is for me to open the ball."

"But what strange tune is that?" said Arnold; "I can't catch the time at all."

"Oh, you soon will," smiled Gertrud; "you'll catch the time in the first five minutes, and I'll tell you how."

With jubilant shouts the whole company, with the exception of the card-players, crowded into the ballroom, and Arnold was soon oblivious of everything else in the first blissful feeling of holding the wondrously beautiful maiden in his arms.

Again and again he danced with Gertrud, and no one else seemed to want to claim his partner from him, although the other girls often threw teasing remarks at him as they flew by.

One thing only struck him and alarmed him. Close by the inn stood the ancient church, and the shrill discordant clang of the cracked bell could be distinctly heard in the ballroom. At the first stroke of the bell it was as if a magician's wand had smitten the dancers.

The music stopped playing in the middle of a beat, the

merry surging crowd stood still and motionless, as if spell-bound, and everyone silently counted the slow strokes one by one.

But as soon as the last sound died away the animation and merriment broke out afresh. This was repeated at eight, at nine, at ten o'clock, and when Arnold would fain inquire what was the reason for such a strange proceeding, Gertrud laid her finger on her lips and at the same time looked so solemn and sad that he would not have troubled her further for all the world.

At ten o'clock there was a pause in the dancing, and the musicians, who must have had lungs of iron, headed the procession of young people down to the supper-room.

There were merry doings there. The wine simply ran in streams, and Arnold, who could not be behindhand among all the others, reckoned up in his own mind what sort of a hole this expensive evening would make in his modest pocket.

But Gertrud was sitting by his side, drinking with him out of the same glass, and how could he give way to any such misgivings? Even though her Heinrich should come to-morrow?

The first stroke of eleven o'clock rang out. Again the loud merriment of the revellers was silenced, again the same breathless listening to the long-drawn strokes.

A peculiar horror overcame him; he could not tell why; and the thought of his mother at home smote through his heart. He slowly raised his glass and drained it in a toast to his absent dear ones.

At the eleventh stroke the company sprang up from the table; the dancing was to begin again and they all scuttled back to the ballroom.

"Who was it you drank your last toast to?" asked Gertrud, as she laid her arm again in his.

Arnold hesitated before replying. Maybe Gertrud would only laugh at him if he told her. But no; she herself had

prayed so fervently on that very afternoon by her own mother's grave—and so he said in a low voice:

"My mother."

Gertrud answered never a word, but walked in silence by his side up the stairs. Her laughter had ceased also, and before they took their places for the dance again she asked him:

"Do you love your mother so much?"

"More than life itself."

"And does she love you?"

"Does not a mother love her child?"

"And what if you never went back home to her?"

"Poor mother!" said Arnold, "her heart would break."

"The dance is just starting again," cried Gertrud quickly; "come along, we mustn't miss a moment more."

So wilder than ever the dance began. The young men, fired by the strong wine, shouted and hurrahed, and shrieked, and such a din arose as threatened to drown the music.

Arnold did not now feel so happy in all this uproar, and Gertrud too had become serious and silent. But with all the others the merriment seemed only to increase, and during a pause the mayor came up to them, gave the young man a hearty slap on the shoulder and said, laughing.

"That's right, Mr. Painter, shake a merry leg to-night; we shall have plenty of time to have a good long rest. Nay, then, Gertie, why pull such a solemn face? Does that fit in with the dance this day? Merry's the word—there, they're off again!

"Now I must look up my old woman and trip the last dance with her. Take your places; the bandsmen are fairly bursting their cheeks again." And with a huzzah he plunged through the crowd of revellers.

Arnold was embracing Gertrud once more for a fresh dance when the latter suddenly broke away from him, gripped his arm and whispered softly: "Come!"

Arnold had no time to ask her whither, for she slipped from his grasp and sped away toward the door.

"Whither away, Gertie?" some of her playmates called out to them.

"Coming back in a moment," came the sound of her curt answer, and a few seconds later she was standing with Arnold outside before the house in the sharp night air.

"Where do you propose to go, Gertrud?"

"Come!"

Again she caught his arm and led him through the village, past her father's house, into which she dashed and presently emerged with a small bundle.

"What is the meaning of this?" asked Arnold in alarm.

"Come!" was the only word she said in answer, and past the houses she strode with him until they left the outermost wall of the village behind them. So far they had followed the broad, firm, hard-trodden highway; now Gertrud turned off the road to the left and mounted a little low hill from the top of which could be seen the brilliantly lighted windows and doors of the inn.

Here she came to a halt, held out her hand to Arnold and said tenderly:

"My greetings to your mother; farewell!"

"Gertrud," cried Arnold, astonished, aghast, "do you wish to send me away from you thus, now, in the middle of the night? Has any word of mine offended you?"

"No, Arnold," said the girl, calling him by his Christian name for the first time. "Just . . . just because I love you, you must go away."

"But I cannot let you go away from me back to the village like this, all alone and in the dark," pleaded Arnold. "Girl, you don't know how much I love you, how utterly and entirely you have won my heart in these few hours. You know not . . ."

"Say no more," she interrupted him quickly, "we will not say good-bye. When the clock has struck twelve—it

can hardly want ten minutes yet—return to the inn door; there I shall be expecting you."

"And until then . . .!"

"Stay just where you are. Promise me not to take one step to right or left till the clock has struck the last stroke of twelve."

"I promise, Gertrud; but then . . ."

"Then come," she said, holding out her hand in farewell, and would have left him.

"Gertrud!" cried Arnold, in a pleading, anguished voice.

Gertrud stood a moment as if in hesitation, then suddenly she turned toward him, threw her arms around his neck, and Arnold felt the icy lips of the lovely maiden pressed on his. It was but for a moment; in the next instant she had torn herself away and was flying toward the village. And Arnold in amaze at her strange behaviour, yet mindful of his promise, remained standing just where she had left him.

Now for the first time he saw how the weather had changed in these few hours. The wind was howling through the trees, the sky was over-cast with heavy racing clouds, and one or two large drops of rain proclaimed the approach of a storm.

Through the darkness of the night the lights glowed bright from the inn, and when the wind came roaring across he could hear in broken waves of sound the riotous blare of the instruments—but not for long. Only for a few moments had he been standing in his place when the clock in the old church tower began to strike. In that same instant the music ceased or was drowned in the howling storm, which raged so violently over the hill-slope that Arnold was obliged to stoop down to the ground in order not to lose his balance.

Before him on the ground he felt the bundle which Gertrud had fetched out of the house—his own knapsack and sketch-book—and affrighted he stood upright again.

The clock had finished striking, the hurricane roared past over his head, but nowhere in the village was there any longer a light to be seen. The dogs which but a short while ago had been barking and howling were silent, and a thick damp mist was rising up from the hollow.

"The time is up," muttered Arnold to himself, hoisting his knapsack on his back, "and I must see Gertrud once again; I cannot part from her like this. The dance is over; the dancers will now be going home, and if the mayor will not put me up for the night I can stay at the inn. Besides, in the darkness I shouldn't find my way through the forest."

He cautiously went down the gentle slope which he and Gertrud had ascended together, in order to strike the broad white road which would bring him to the village, but in vain did he grope about for it among the bushes below.

The ground was soft and swampy, and in his thin boots he sank in up to the ankles; there was everywhere a tangle of alder-bushes growing just where he had imagined the road to be. He could not possibly have crossed it in the dark; he could not have failed to feel it the moment he stepped on it; and besides, he knew that the village wall ran right across it—this at any rate he could not miss.

But it was in vain that with anguished haste he sought for it; the ground became more soft, more swampy the farther he advanced, the undergrowth became thicker and everywhere beset with thorns, which tore his clothes and scratched his hands till they bled.

Had he wandered off to the right or to the left and beyond the village? He feared lest he should lose his bearings still more completely, and came to a halt on a fairly dry spot, determined to wait there until the old clock should strike one.

But it did not strike, not a dog barked, no sound of human voice reached him, and with great difficulty, wet to the

skin, and shivering with cold, he toiled back again to the higher ground of the hill-slope where Gertrud had left him.

From this spot he tried, indeed, a few more times to penetrate the thicket and find the village, but in vain. Tired to death, and a prey to a peculiar horror, he at last avoided the low, dark, weird hollow and sought the shelter of a tree, there to spend the night.

And how slowly for him did the hours pass by! For shivering as he was with cold, he was not able to steal from that long night even one moment's sleep. And he was for ever straining his ears into the darkness, as again and again he thought he heard the rasping sound of the bell, only to find again and again that he had been mistaken.

At last the first glow of light began to dawn out of the far east. The clouds had dispersed, the sky was once more clear and bright with stars, and the awakening birds twittered softly in the gloomy trees.

Brighter and lighter grew the golden horizon; already he could clearly discern the tree-tops round about him; but it was in vain that his eye sought the view of the old brown church-tower and the weather-worn roofs. Nothing but a wilderness of alder-bushes dotted here and there with a few stunted willows, stretched out before him. No road was to be seen leading to the right or to the left, no sign of human habitation in the vicinity.

The day broke clearer and clearer. The earliest sunbeams fell upon the broad green expanse that spread out before his gaze; and Arnold, who was at a loss to solve the riddle, wandered some considerable distance back into the valley. He *must*, he thought, have lost his way in the dark, without knowing it, while he was seeking for the place, and had got too far away. He was now firmly determined to find it again.

At length he came to the stone near which he had drawn Gertrud's picture. This spot he would have recognised

again out of thousands, for the old lilac-tree with its stiff branches indicated it only too clearly.

He now knew exactly from what direction he had come and where Germelshausen must lie; so he paced rapidly back along the valley, keeping closely to the same track which he and Gertrud had followed yesterday. Over there also he recognised the bend in the slope over which had hung the murky fog, and only the alder-bushes still separated him from the nearest houses.

Now he had reached it; he pressed on and—found himself once more in the very same swampy morass in which he had waded about the night before.

Completely at a loss and not trusting his own senses, he was for forcing a way through at this point, but the filthy swamp-ooze at length compelled him to make for dry ground again, and there he wandered helplessly backward and forward.

The village had disappeared, and that was the end of it.

Several hours had perhaps been consumed in this fruitless search, and his weary limbs at last refused to serve him any longer. He could go no further; before anything else he must rest. What had been the use of his vain quest? At the first village he came across he could easily find a guide to conduct him to Germelshausen, and then he could not miss the road again.

Dead tired he flung himself down under a tree—and how utterly ruined was his best suit! This, however, did not trouble him now; he produced his sketch-book and out of it he took Gertrud's portrait. With bitter pain his eyes fastened on the dear, sweet features of the maiden, who, as he realised to his great alarm, had already taken too firm a hold upon his heart.

Then he heard behind him a rustling among the leaves—a dog began to bark, and quickly springing to his feet, he was aware of an old woodsman standing not far away from

him and curiously observing the strange figure who was so decently dressed and yet presented such a wild appearance.

"Greeting!" exclaimed Arnold, heartily pleased to meet a human being, and quickly thrusting the picture back into the portfolio. "You could not have been more welcome if I had invited you here, Herr Forester, for I think I have lost my way."

"H'm," said the old man, "if you have been lying here in the bush all night, I should think so too, and hardly half an hour's walk over yonder to Dillstedt and a good inn. Heavens! what a sight you are, for all the world as if you had been dragged neck and crop out of thorns and mud!"

"Are you quite familiar with the forest here?" asked Arnold, who before all things wanted to know where he really was.

"I should think I was," laughed the woodsman as he struck a light and lighted his pipe again.

"What is the name of the nearest village?"

"Dillstedt—straight over there. When you get on to that little hill yonder, you can easily see it lying below you."

"And how far is it from here to Germelshausen?"

"To where?" cried the woodsman, removing his pipe in horror from his lips.

"To Germelshausen."

"God help me!" said the old man, casting a scared look about him; "the forest I know well enough, but how many fathoms deep down below the earth the 'cursed village' lies, God alone knows—nor is it any business of ours."

"The 'cursed village'?" cried Arnold in astonishment.

"Germelshausen—yes," said the woodsman. "Just there in the swamp, where now grow the old willows and alders, it is said to have stood hundreds and hundreds of years ago. Later on it sank away, no man knows why or wither;

and the story goes that every hundred years on a certain day it is raised up again to the light of heaven, but I should not wish any Christian man to chance to be there then.

"But, man alive! camping out in the bush last night does not seem to have agreed with you. You look as white as a ghost. There now, just you have a sip out of this flask; it will do you good—now have a good pull!"

"Thank you."

"Tut, tut, that wasn't half enough—take a proper, first-class [1] pull at it. That's right; that's the real stuff to take. And now make haste and get across to the inn, and into a warm bed."

"In Dillstedt?"

"Why, of course: there's none nearer."

"What about Germelshausen?"

"Be good enough not to mention the place again, especially here on the spot where we are standing Let the dead rest, and above all those who do not even enjoy rest, but keep on rising again unexpectedly amongst us."

"But only yesterday the village was still standing here," cried Arnold, who had almost lost his trust in his own senses. "I was inside it—eating and drinking and dancing there!"

The woodsman calmly looked the young man up and down, and then said with a smile:

"But it went by some other name, didn't it? Probably you have come straight over from Dillstedt. There was a dance there yesterday evening, and it's not everybody can stand the strong beer that the landlord brews at present."

By way of answer Arnold opened his portfolio and drew out the drawing that he had made from the churchyard.

"Do you know that village?"

"No," said the woodsman shaking his head; "there's not such a flat tower as that in the whole countryside."

[1] Literally: such a big pull that it requires three gulps (of Adam's apple) to swallow it down.

"That is Germelshausen," cried Arnold; "and do the peasant girls in this neighbourhood dress as this girl does here?"

"Um—no! and what's that queer-looking funeral procession you have put in the picture?"

Arnold returned no answer. He thrust the sheets back again into the portfolio, and a strange feeling of pain thrilled through him.

"You can't miss the road to Dillstedt," said the woodsman good-naturedly, for a dark suspicion now occurred to him that the stranger might perhaps not be quite right in the head. "But if you would like, I will accompany you till we come to where we can see the place; that won't take me much out of my way."

Arnold declined with many thanks. "I'll find my way over there all right. And so it is only once in every hundred years that they say the village comes up again?"

"So people say," answered the woodsman, "but who can say if it is true?"

Arnold had taken up his knapsack again.

"God be wi' you!" he said, holding out his hand to the woodsman.

"Many thanks," answered he; "where are you going now?"

"To Dillstedt."

"That's right—when you get over the slope you'll come to the broad highroad again."

Arnold turned away, and slowly proceeded on his way. Only when he had reached the top of the slope which commanded a view over the whole of the valley, did he pause once again and look back.

"Farewell, Gertrud!" he murmured softly, and as he walked over the hill, the big crystal tears were streaming from his eyes.

THEODOR W. STORM

(1817–1888)

IMMENSEE

(Translated by C. W. Bell, M.A.)

The Old Man

One afternoon in the late autumn a well-dressed old man was walking slowly down the street. He appeared to be returning home from a walk, for his buckle-shoes, which followed a fashion long since out of date, were covered with dust.

Under his arm he carried a long, gold-headed cane; his dark eyes, in which the whole of his long-lost youth seemed to have centred, and which contrasted strangely with his snow-white hair, gazed calmly on the sights around him or peered into the town below as it lay before him, bathed in the haze of sunset.

He appeared to be almost a stranger, for of the passers-by only a few greeted him, although many a one involuntarily was compelled to gaze into those grave eyes.

At last he halted before a high, gabled house, cast one more glance out toward the town, and then passed into the hall. At the sound of the door-bell some one in the room within drew aside the green curtain from a small window that looked out on to the hall, and the face of an old woman was seen behind it. The man made a sign to her with his cane.

"No light yet!" he said in a slightly southern accent, and the housekeeper let the curtain fall again.

The old man now passed through the broad hall, through an inner hall, wherein against the walls stood huge oaken chests bearing porcelain vases; then through the door opposite he entered a small lobby, from which a narrow staircase led to the upper rooms at the back of the house. He climbed the stairs slowly, unlocked a door at the top, and landed in a room of medium size.

It was a comfortable, quiet retreat. One of the walls was lined with cupboards and bookcases; on the other hung pictures of men and places; on a table with a green cover lay a number of open books, and before the table stood a massive arm-chair with a red velvet cushion.

After the old man had placed his hat and stick in a corner, he sat down in the arm-chair and, folding his hands, seemed to be taking his rest after his walk. While he sat thus, it was growing gradually darker; and before long a moonbeam came streaming through the window-panes and upon the pictures on the wall; and as the bright band of light passed slowly onward the old man followed it involuntarily with his eyes.

Now it reached a little picture in a simple black frame. "Elisabeth!" said the old man softly; and as he uttered the word, time had changed: *he was young again.*

The Children

Before very long the dainty form of a little maiden advanced toward him. Her name was Elisabeth, and she might have been five years old. He himself was twice that age. Round her neck she wore a red silk kerchief which was very becoming to her brown eyes.

"Reinhard!" she cried, "we have a holiday, a holiday! No school the whole day and none to-morrow either!"

Reinhard was carrying his slate under his arm, but he flung it behind the front door, and then both the children

ran through the house into the garden and through the garden gate out into the meadow. The unexpected holiday came to them at a most happily opportune moment.

It was in the meadow that Reinhard, with Elisabeth's help, had built a house out of sods of grass. They meant to live in it during the summer evenings; but it still wanted a bench. He set to work at once; nails, hammer, and the necessary boards were already to hand.

While he was thus engaged, Elisabeth went along the dyke, gathering the ring-shaped seeds of the wild mallow in her apron, with the object of making herself chains and necklaces out of them; so that when Reinhard had at last finished his bench in spite of many a crookedly hammered nail, and came out into the sunlight again, she was already wandering far away at the other end of the meadow.

"Elisabeth!" he called, "Elisabeth!" and then she came, her hair streaming behind her.

"Come here," he said; "our house is finished now. Why, you have got quite hot! Come in, and let us sit on the new bench. I will tell you a story."

So they both went in and sat down on the new bench. Elisabeth took the little seed-rings out of her apron and strung them on long threads. Reinhard began his tale: "There were once upon a time three spinning-women . . ." [1]

"Oh!" said Elisabeth, "I know that off by heart; you really must not always tell me the same story."

Accordingly Reinhard had to give up the story of the three spinning-women and tell instead the story of the poor man who was cast into the den of lions.

"It was now night," he said, "black night, you know, and the lions were asleep. But every now and then they would yawn in their sleep and shoot out their red tongues. And then the man would shudder and think it was morning. All at once a bright light fell all about him, and when he looked up an angel was standing before him. The angel

[1] The beginning of one of the best known of Grimm's fairy tales.

beckoned to him with his hand and then went straight into the rocks.

Elisabeth had been listening attentively. "An angel?" she said. "Had he wings, then?"

"It is only a story," answered Reinhard; "there are no angels, you know"

"Oh, fie! Reinhard!" she said, staring him straight in the face.

He looked at her with a frown, and she asked him hesitatingly: "Well, why do they always say there are? Mother, and Aunt, and at school as well?"

"I don't know," he answered.

"But tell me," said Elisabeth, "are there no lions either?"

"Lions? Are there lions? In India, yes. The heathen priests harness them to their carriages, and drive about the desert with them. When I'm big, I mean to go out there myself. It is thousands of times more beautiful in that country than it is here at home; there's no winter at all there. And you must come with me Will you?"

"Yes," said Elisabeth; "but Mother must come with us, and your mother as well."

"No," said Reinhard, "they will be too old then, and cannot come with us."

"But I mayn't go by myself"

"Oh, but you may right enough; you will then really be my wife, and the others will have no say in the matter."

"But Mother will cry!"

"We shall come back again, of course," said Reinhard impetuously. "Now just tell me straight out, will you go with me? If not, I will go all alone, and then I shall never come back again."

The little girl came very near to crying. "Please don't look so angry," said she; "I will go to India with you."

Reinhard seized both her hands with frantic glee, and rushed out with her into the meadow.

"To India, to India!" he sang, and swung her round

and round, so that her little red kerchief was whirled from off her neck. Then he suddenly let her go and said solemnly:

"Nothing will come of it, I'm sure; you haven't the pluck."

"Elisabeth! Reinhard!" some one was now calling from the garden gate. "Here we are!" the children answered, and raced home hand in hand.

In the Woods

So the children lived together. She was often too quiet for him, and he was often too headstrong for her, but for all that they stuck to one another. They spent nearly all their leisure hours together: in winter in their mothers' tiny rooms, during the summer in wood and field.

Once when Elisabeth was scolded by the teacher in Reinhard's hearing, he angrily banged his slate upon the table in order to turn upon himself the master's wrath. This failed to attract attention.

But Reinhard paid no further attention to the geography lessons, and instead he composed a long poem, in which he compared himself to a young eagle, the schoolmaster to a grey crow, and Elisabeth to a white dove; the eagle vowed vengeance on the grey crow, as soon as his wings had grown.

Tears stood in the young poet's eyes: he felt very proud of himself. When he reached home he contrived to get hold of a little parchment-bound volume with a lot of blank pages in it; and on the first pages he elaborately wrote out his first poem.

Soon after this he went to another school. Here he made many new friendships among boys of his own age, but this did not interrupt his comings and goings with Elisabeth. Of the stories which he had formerly told her over and over again he now began to write down the ones which she had liked best, and in doing so the fancy often took him

to weave in something of his own thoughts; yet, for some reason he could not understand, he could never manage it.

So he wrote them down exactly as he had heard them himself. Then he handed them over to Elisabeth, who kept them carefully in a drawer of her writing-desk, and now and again of an evening when he was present it afforded him agreeable satisfaction to hear her reading aloud to her mother these little tales out of the notebooks in which he had written them.

Seven years had gone by. Reinhard was to leave the town in order to proceed to his higher education. Elisabeth could not bring herself to think that there would now be a time to be passed entirely without Reinhard. She was delighted when he told her one day that he would continue to write out stories for her as before; he would send them to her in the letters to his mother, and then she would have to write back to him and tell him how she liked them.

The day of departure was approaching, but ere it came a good deal more poetry found its way into the parchment-bound volume. This was the one secret he kept from Elisabeth, although she herself had inspired the whole book and most of the songs, which gradually had filled up almost half of the blank pages.

It was the month of June, and Reinhard was to start on the following day. It was proposed to spend one more festive day together, and therefore a picnic was arranged for a rather large party of friends in an adjacent forest.

It was an hour's drive along the road to the edge of the wood, and there the company took down the provision baskets from the carriages and walked the rest of the way. The road lay first of all through a pine grove, where it was cool and darksome, and the ground was all strewed with pine needles.

After half an hour's walk they passed out of the gloom of the pine trees into a bright fresh beech wood. Here everything was light and green; every here and there a sunbeam

burst through the leafy branches, and high above their heads a squirrel was leaping from branch to branch.

The party came to a halt at a certain spot, over which the topmost branches of ancient beech trees interwove a transparent canopy of leaves. Elisabeth's mother opened one of the baskets, and an old gentleman constituted himself quartermaster.

"Round me, all of you young people," he cried, "and attend carefully to what I have to say to you. For lunch each one of you will now get two dry rolls; the butter has been left behind at home. The extras every one must find for himself. There are plenty of strawberries in the wood—that is, for any one who knows where to find them. Unless you are sharp, you'll have to eat dry bread; that's the way of the world all over. Do you understand what I say?"

"Yes, yes," cried the young folks.

"Yes, but look here," said the old gentleman, "I have not done yet. We old folks have done enough roaming about in our time, and therefore we will stay at home now, here, I mean, under these wide-spreading trees, and we'll peel the potatoes and make a fire and lay the table, and by twelve o'clock the eggs shall be boiled.

"In return for all this you will be owing us half of your strawberries, so that we may also be able to serve some dessert. So off you go now, east and west, and mind be honest."

The young folks cast many a roguish glance at one another.

"Wait," cried the old gentleman once again. "I suppose I need not tell you this, that whoever finds none need not produce any; but take particular note of this, that he will get nothing out of us old folks either. Now you have had enough good advice for to-day; and if you gather strawberries to match you will get on very well for the present at any rate."

The young people were of the same opinion, and pairing off in couples set out on their quest

"Come along, Elisabeth," said Reinhard, "I know where there is a clump of strawberry bushes; you shan't eat dry bread."

Elisabeth tied the green ribbons of her straw hat together and hung it on her arm. "Come on, then," she said, "the basket is ready."

Off into the wood they went, on and on; on through moist shady glens, where everything was so peaceful, except for the cry of the falcon flying unseen in the heavens far above their heads; on again through the thick brushwood, so thick that Reinhard must needs go on ahead to make a track, here snapping off a branch, there bending aside a trailing vine. But ere long he heard Elisabeth behind him calling out his name. He turned round.

"Reinhard!" she called, "do wait for me! Reinhard!"

He could not see her, but at length he caught sight of her some way off struggling with the undergrowth, her dainty head just peeping out over the tops of the ferns. So back he went once more and brought her out from the tangled mass of briar and brake into an open space where blue butterflies fluttered among the solitary wood blossoms.

Reinhard brushed the damp hair away from her heated face, and would have tied the straw hat upon her head, but she refused; yet at his earnest request she consented after all.

"But where are your strawberries?" she asked at length, standing still and drawing a deep breath.

"They were here," he said, "but the toads have got here before us, or the martens, or perhaps the fairies."

"Yes," said Elisabeth, "the leaves are still here; but not a word about fairies in this place. Come along, I'm not a bit tired yet; let us look farther on."

In front of them ran a little brook, and on the far side

the wood began again. Reinhard raised Elisabeth in his arms, and carried her over. After a while they emerged from the shady foliage and stood in a wide clearing.

"There must be strawberries here," said the girl, "it all smells so sweet."

They searched about the sunny spot, but they found none. "No," said Reinhard, "it is only the smell of the heather."

Everywhere was a confusion of raspberry-bushes and holly, and the air was filled with a strong smell of heather, patches of which alternated with the short grass over these open spaces.

"How lonely it is here!" said Elisabeth: "I wonder where the others are?"

Reinhard had never thought of getting back.

"Wait a bit," he said, holding his hand aloft; "where is the wind coming from?" But wind there was none.

"Listen!" said Elisabeth; "I think I heard them talking. Just give a call in that direction."

Reinhard hollowed his hand and shouted: "Come here!"

"Here!" was echoed back.

"They answered," cried Elisabeth clapping her hands.

"No, that was nothing; it was only the echo."

Elisabeth seized Reinhard's hand. "I'm frightened!" she said.

"Oh! no, you must not be frightened. It is lovely here. Sit down there in the shade among the long grass. Let us rest awhile: we'll find the others soon enough"

Elisabeth sat down under the overhanging branch of a beech and listened intently in every direction. Reinhard sat a few paces off on a tree stump, and gazed over at her in silence.

The sun was just above their heads, shining with the full glare of midday heat. Tiny, gold-flecked, steel-blue flies poised in the air with vibrating wings. Their ears caught

a gentle humming and buzzing all round them, and far away in the wood were heard now and again the tap-tap of the wood-pecker and the screech of other birds.

"Listen," said Elisabeth, "I hear a bell."

"Where?" asked Reinhard.

"Behind us. Do you hear it? It is striking twelve o'clock."

"Then the town lies behind us, and if we go straight through in this direction we are bound to fall in with the others."

So they started on their homeward way; they had given up looking for strawberries, for Elisabeth had become tired. And at last there rang out from among the trees the laughing voices of the picnic party; then they saw too a white cloth spread gleaming on the ground; it was the luncheon-table and on it were strawberries enough and to spare.

The old gentleman had a table-napkin tucked in his button-hole and was continuing his moral sermon to the young folks and vigorously carving a joint of roast meat.

"Here come the stragglers," cried the young people when they saw Reinhard and Elisabeth advancing among the trees.

"This way," shouted the old gentleman. "Empty your handkerchiefs, upside down with your hats! Now show us what you have found."

"Only hunger and thirst," said Reinhard.

"If that's all," replied the old man, lifting up and showing them the bowl full of fruit, "you must keep what you've got. You remember the agreement: nothing here for lazybones to eat."

But in the end he was prevailed on to relent; the banquet proceeded, and a thrush in a juniper bush provided the music.

So the day pased. But Reinhard had, after all, found something, and though it was not strawberries yet it was something that had grown in the wood. When he got

home this is what he wrote in his old parchment-bound volume:

Out on the hill-side yonder
The wind to rest is laid;
Under the drooping branches
There sits the little maid.

She sits among the wild thyme,
She sits in the fragrant air;
The blue flies hum around her,
Bright wings flash everywhere.

And through the silent woodland
She peers with watchful eyen,
While on her hazel ringlets
Sparkles the glad sunshine.

And far, far off the cuckoo
Laughs out his song between
Hers are the bright, the golden
Eyes of the woodland queen.

So she was not only his little sweetheart, but was also the expression of all that was lovely and wonderful in his opening life.

By the Roadside the Child Stood

The time is Christmas Eve. Before the close of the afternoon Reinhard and some other students were sitting together at an old oak table in the Ratskeller.[1] The lamps on the wall were lighted, for down here in the basement it was already growing dark; but there was only a thin sprinkling of customers present, and the waiters were leaning idly up against the pillars let into the walls.

In a corner of the vaulted room sat a fiddler and a fine-featured gipsy-girl with a zither; their instruments lay in their laps, and they seemed to be looking about them with an air of indifference.

[1] The basement of the *Rathaus* or Town Hall. This, in almost every German town of importance, has become a restaurant and place of refreshment.

A champagne cork popped off at the table occupied by the students. "Drink, my gipsy darling!" cried a young man of aristocratic appearance, holding out to the girl a glass full of wine.

"I don't care about it," she said, without altering her position.

"Well, then, give us a song," cried the young nobleman, and threw a silver coin into her lap. The girl slowly ran her fingers through her black hair while the fiddler whispered in her ear. But she threw back her head, and rested her chin on her zither.

"For him," she said, "I'm not going to play."

Reinhard leapt up with his glass in his hand and stood in front of her.

"What do you want?" she asked defiantly.

"To have a look at your eyes."

"What have my eyes to do with you?"

Reinhard's glance flashed down on her.

"I *know* they are false."

She laid her cheek in the palm of her hand and gave him a searching look. Reinhard raised his glass to his mouth.

"Here's to your beautiful, wicked eyes!" he said, and drank.

She laughed and tossed her head.

"Give it here," she said, and fastening her black eyes on his, she slowly drank what was left in the glass. Then she struck a chord and sang in a deep, passionate voice:

To-day, to-day thou think'st me
  Fairest maid of all;
To-morrow, ah! then beauty
  Fadeth past recall.
While the hour remaineth,
  Thou art yet mine own;
Then when death shall claim me,
  I must die alone.

While the fiddler struck up an allegro finale, a new arrival joined the group.

"I went to call for you, Reinhard," he said. "You had already gone out, but Santa Claus had paid you a visit."

"Santa Claus?" said Reinhard. "Santa Claus never comes to me now."

"Oh, yes, he does! The whole of your room smelt of Christmas tree and ginger cakes."

Reinhard dropped the glass out of his hand and seized his cap.

"Well, what are you going to do now?" asked the girl.

"I'll be back in a minute."

She frowned. "Stay," she said gently, casting an amorous glance at him.

Reinhard hesitated. "I can't," he said.

She laughingly gave him a tap with the toe of her shoe and said: "Go away, then, you good-for-nothing; you are one as bad as the other, all good-for-nothings." And as she turned away from him, Reinhard went slowly up the steps of the Ratskeller.

Outside in the street deep twilight had set in; he felt the cool winter air blowing on his heated brow. From some window every here and there fell the bright gleam of a Christmas tree all lighted up, now and then was heard from within some room the sound of little pipes and tin trumpets mingled with the merry din of children's voices.

Crowds of beggar children were going from house to house or climbing up on to the railings of the front steps, trying to catch a glimpse through the window of a splendour that was denied to them. Sometimes too a door would suddenly be flung open, and scolding voices would drive a whole swarm of these little visitors away out into the dark street. In the vestibule of yet another house they were singing an old Christmas carol, and little girls' clear voices were heard among the rest.

But Reinhard heard not; he passed quickly by them all, out of one street into another. When he reached his

lodging it had grown almost quite dark; he stumbled up the stairs and so gained his apartment.

A sweet fragrance greeted him; it reminded him of home; it was the smell of the parlour in his mother's house at Christmas time. With trembling hand he lit his lamp; and there lay a mighty parcel on the table. When he opened it, out fell the familiar ginger cakes. On some of them were the initial letters of his name written in sprinkles of sugar; no one but Elisabeth could have done that.

Next came to view a little parcel containing neatly embroidered linen, handkerchiefs and cuffs; and finally letters from his mother and Elisabeth. Reinhard opened Elisabeth's letter first, and this is what she wrote:

"The pretty sugared letters will no doubt tell you who helped with the cakes. The same person also embroidered the cuffs for you. We shall have a very quiet time at home this Christmas Eve. Mother always puts her spinning-wheel away in the corner as early as half-past nine. It is so very lonesome this winter now that you are not here.

"And now, too, the linnet you made me a present of died last Sunday. It made me cry a good deal, though I am sure I looked after it well.

"It always used to sing of an afternoon when the sun shone on its cage. You remember how often mother would hang a piece of cloth over the cage in order to keep it quiet when it sang so lustily.

"Thus our room is now quieter than ever, except that your old friend Eric now drops in to see us occasionally. You told us once that he was just like his brown top-coat. I can't help thinking of it every time he comes in at the door, and it is really too funny; but don't tell mother, it might easily make her angry.

"Guess what I am giving your mother for a Christmas present! You can't guess; Well, it is myself! Eric is making a drawing of me in black chalk; I have had to give him three sittings, each time for a whole hour.

"I simply loathed the idea of a stranger getting to know my face so well. Nor did I wish it, but mother pressed me, and said it would very much please dear Frau Werner.

"But you are not keeping your word, Reinhard. You haven't sent me any stories. I have often complained to your mother about it, but she always says you now have more to do than to attend to such childish things. But I don't believe it; there's something else perhaps."

After this Reinhard read his mother's letter, and when he had read them both and slowly folded them up again and put them away, he was overcome with an irresistible feeling of homesickness. For a long while he walked up and down his room, talking softly to himself, and then, under his breath, he murmured:

I have err'd from the straight path,
Bewildered I roam;
By the roadside the child stands
And beckons me home.

Then he went to his desk, took out some money, and stepped down into the street again. During all this while it had become quieter out there; the lights on the Christmas trees had burnt out, the processions of children had come to an end. The wind was sweeping through the deserted streets; old and young alike were sitting together at home in family parties; the second period of Christmas Eve celebrations had begun.

As Reinhard drew near the Ratskeller he heard from below the scraping of the fiddle and the singing of the zither girl. The restaurant door bell tinkled and a dark form staggered up the broad dimly-lighted stair.

Reinhard drew aside into the shadow of the houses and then passed swiftly by. After a while he reached the well-lighted shop of a jeweller, and after buying a little cross studded with red corals, he returned by the same way he had come.

Not far from his lodgings he caught sight of a little girl, dressed in miserable rags, standing before a tall door, in a vain attempt to open it.

"Shall I help you?" he said.

The child gave no answer, but let go the massive door-handle. Reinhard had soon opened the door.

"No," he said; "they might drive you out again. Come along with me, and I'll give you some Christmas cake."

He then closed the door again and gave his hand to the little girl, who walked along with him in silence to his lodgings.

On going out he had left the light burning.

"Here are some cakes for you," he said, pouring half of his whole stock into her apron, though he gave none that bore the sugar letters.

"Now, off you go home, and give your mother some of them too"

The child cast a shy look up at him; she seemed unaccustomed to such kindness and unable to say anything in reply. Reinhard opened the door, and lighted her way, and then the little thing like a bird flew downstairs with her cakes and out of the house.

Reinhard poked the fire in the stove, set the dusty inkstand on the table, and then sat down and wrote and wrote letters the whole night long to his mother and Elisabeth.

The remainder of the Christmas cakes lay untouched by his side, but he had buttoned on Elisabeth's cuffs, and odd they looked on his shaggy coat of undyed wool. And there he was still sitting when the winter sun cast its light on the frosted window-panes, and showed him a pale, grave face reflected in the looking-glass.

Home

When the Easter vacation came Reinhard journeyed home. On the morning after his arrival he went to see Elisabeth.

"How tall you've grown!" he said, as the pretty, slender girl advanced with a smile to meet him. She blushed, but made no reply; he had taken her hand in his own in greeting, and she tried to draw it gently away. He looked at her doubtingly, for never had she done that before; but now it was as if some strange thing was coming between them.

The same feeling remained, too, after he had been at home for some time and came to see her constantly day after day. When they sat alone together there ensued pauses in the conversation which distressed him, and which he anxiously did his best to avoid. In order to have a definite occupation during the holidays, he began to give Elisabeth some instruction in botany, in which he himself had been keenly interested during the early months of his university career.

Elisabeth, who was wont to follow him in all things and was moreover very quick to learn, willingly entered into the proposal. So now several times in the week they made excursions into the fields or the moors, and if by midday they brought home their green field-box full of plants and flowers, Reinhard would come again later in the day and share with Elisabeth what they had collected in common.

With this same object in view, he entered the room one afternoon while Elisabeth was standing by the window and sticking some fresh chickweed in a gilded birdcage which he had not seen in the place before. In the cage was a canary, which was flapping its wings and shrilly chirruping as it pecked at Elisabeth's fingers. Previously to this Reinhard's bird had hung in that spot.

"Has my poor linnet changed into a goldfinch after its death?" he asked jovially

"Linnets are not accustomed to do any such thing," said Elisabeth's mother, who sat spinning in her armchair. "Your friend Eric sent it this noon from his estate as a present for Elisabeth."

"What estate?"

"Why, don't you know?"

"Know what?"

"That a month ago Eric took over his father's second estate by the Immensee." [1]

"But you have never said a word to me about it."

"Well," said the mother, "you haven't yet made a single word of inquiry after your friend. He is a very nice, sensible young man."

The mother went out of the room to make the coffee. Elisabeth had her back turned to Reinhard, and was still busy with the making of her little chickweed bower.

"Please, just a little longer," she said, "I'll be done in a minute."

As Reinhard did not answer, contrary to his wont, she turned round and faced him. In his eyes there was a sudden expression of trouble which she had never observed before in them.

"What is the matter with you, Reinhard?" she said, drawing nearer to him.

"With me?" he said, his thoughts far away and his eyes resting dreamily on hers.

"You look so sad."

"Elisabeth," he said, "I cannot bear that yellow bird."

She looked at him in astonishment, without understanding his meaning. "You are so strange," she said.

He took both her hands in his, and she let him keep them there. Her mother came back into the room shortly after; and after they had drunk their coffee she sat down at her spinning-wheel, while Reinhard and Elisabeth went off into the next room to arrange their plants.

Stamens were counted, leaves and blossoms carefully opened out, and two specimens of each sort were laid to dry between the pages of a large folio volume.

All was calm and still this sunny afternoon; the only

[1] *I.e.* the "Lake of the Bees."

sounds to be heard were the hum of the mother's spinning-wheel in the next room, and now and then the subdued voice of Reinhard, as he named the orders of the families of the plants, and corrected Elisabeth's awkward pronunciation of the Latin names.

"I am still short of that lily of the valley which I didn't get last time," said she, after the whole collection had been classified and arranged.

Reinhard pulled a little white vellum volume from his pocket. "Here is a spray of the lily of the valley for you," he said, taking out a half-pressed bloom.

When Elisabeth saw the pages all covered with writing, she asked: "Have you been writing stories again?"

"These aren't stories," he answered, handing her the book.

The contents were all poems, and the majority of them at most filled one page. Elisabeth turned over the leaves one after another; she appeared to be reading the titles only. "When she was scolded by the teacher." "When they lost their way in the woods." "An Easter story." "On her writing to me for the first time." Thus ran most of the titles.

Reinhard fixed his eyes on her with a searching look, and as she kept turning over the leaves he saw that a gentle blush arose and gradually mantled over the whole of her sweet face. He would fain have looked into her eyes, but Elisabeth did not look up, and finally laid the book down before him without a word

"Don't give it back like that," he said.

She took a brown spray out of the tin case "I will put your favourite flower inside," she said, giving back the book into his hands.

At length came the last day of the vacation and the morning of his departure. At her own request Elisabeth received permission from her mother to accompany her friend to the stage-coach, which had its station a few streets from their house.

When they passed out of the front door Reinhard gave her his arm, and thus he walked in silence side by side with the slender maiden. The nearer they came to their destination the more he felt as if he had something he must say to her before he bade her a long farewell, something on which all that was worthy and all that was sweet in his future life depended, and yet he could not formulate the saving word. In his anguish, he walked slower and slower.

"You'll be too late," she said; "it has already struck ten by St. Mary's clock."

But he did not quicken his pace for all that. At last he stammered out:

"Elisabeth, you will not see me again for two whole years. Shall I be as dear to you as ever when I come back?"

She nodded, and looked affectionately into his face.

"I stood up for you too," she said, after a pause.

"Me? And against whom had you to stand up for me?"

"Against my mother. We were talking about you a long time yesterday evening after you left. She thought you were not so nice now as you once were."

Reinhard held his peace for a moment. then he took her hand in his, and looking gravely into her childish eyes, he said:

"I am still just as nice as I ever was; I would have you firmly believe that. Do you believe it, Elisabeth?"

"Yes," she said.

He freed her hand and quickly walked with her through the last street. The nearer he felt the time of parting approach, the happier became the look on his face; he went almost too quickly for her.

"What is the matter with you, Reinhard?" she asked.

"I have a secret, a beautiful secret," said Reinhard, looking at her with a light in his eyes. "When I come back again in two years' time, then you shall know it."

Meanwhile they had reached the stage-coach; they were

only just in time. Once more Reinhard took her hand. "Farewell!" he said, "farewell, Elisabeth! Do not forget!"

She shook her head. "Farewell," she said. Reinhard climbed up into the coach and the horses started As the coach rumbled round the corner of the street he saw her dear form once more as she slowly wended her way home.

A Letter

Nearly two years later Reinhard was sitting by lamplight with his books and papers around him, expecting a friend with whom he used to study in common. Some one came upstairs. "Come in." It was the landlady. "A letter for you, Herr Werner," and she went away.

Reinhard had never written to Elisabeth since his visit home, and he had received no letter from her. Nor was this one from her; it was in his mother's handwriting.

Reinhard broke the seal and read, and ere long he came to this paragraph:

"At your time of life, my dear boy, nearly every year still brings its own peculiar experience; for youth is apt to turn everything to the best account. At home, too, things have changed very much, and all this will, I fear, cause you much pain at first, if my understanding of you is at all correct.

"Yesterday Eric was at last accepted by Elisabeth, after having twice proposed in vain during the last three months. She had never been able to make up her mind to it, but now in the end she has done so. To my mind she is still far too young. The wedding is to take place soon, and her mother means to go away with them."

Immensee

Again years have passed. One warm afternoon in spring a young man, whose sunburnt face was the picture of

health, was walking along a shady road through the wood leading down to the valley below.

His grave dark eyes looked intently into the distance, as though he was expecting to find every moment some change in the monotony of the road, a change, however, which seemed reluctant to come about. At length he saw a cart slowly coming up from below.

"Hullo! my friend," shouted the traveller to the farmer, who was walking by the side of the cart, "is this the right road to Immensee?"

"Yes, straight on," answered the man, touching his slouch hat.

"Is it still far off?"

"You are close to the place, sir. In less time than it takes to smoke half a pipe of tobacco you'll be at the lake side, and the manor is hard by."

The farmer passed on, while the other quickened his pace as he went along under the trees. After a quarter of an hour's walk the shade to the left of him suddenly came to an end; the road led along a steep slope from which the ancient oaks growing below hardly reared their topmost branches

Away over their crests opened out a broad, sunny landscape. Far below lay the peaceful, dark-blue lake, almost entirely surrounded by green sun-lit woods, save where on one spot they divided and afforded an extensive view until it closed in the distant blue mountains.

Straight opposite, in the middle of all this forest verdure, there lay a patch of white, like driven snow. This was an expanse of blossoming fruit-trees, and out of them, up on the high lake shore, rose the manor-house, shining white, with tiles of red. A stork flew up from the chimney, and circled slowly above the waters.

"Immensee!" exclaimed the traveller.

It almost seemed as if he had now reached the end of his journey, for he stood motionless, looking out over the tops

of the trees at his feet, and gazing at the farther shore, where the reflection of the manor-house floated, rocking gently, on the bosom of the water. Then he suddenly started on his way again.

His road now led almost steeply down the mountain-side, so that the trees that had once stood below him again gave him their shade, but at the same time cut off from him the view of the lake, which only now and then peeped out between the gaps in the branches.

Soon the way went gently upwards again, and to left and right the woods disappeared, yielding place to vine-clad hills stretching along the pathway; while on either side stood fruit-trees in blossom, filled with the hum of the bees as they busily pried into the blossoms. A tall man wearing a brown overcoat advanced to meet the traveller. When he had almost come up to him, he waved his cap and cried out in a loud voice:

"Welcome, welcome, brother Reinhard! Welcome to my Immensee estate!"

"God's greeting to you,[1] Eric, and thank you for your welcome," replied the other.

By this time they had come up close to one another, and clasped hands.

"And is it really you?" said Eric, when he at last got a near sight of the grave face of his old school-fellow.

"It is I right enough, Eric, and I recognise you too; only you almost look cheerier than you ever did before."

At these words a glad smile made Eric's plain features all the more cheerful.

"Yes, brother Reinhard," he said, as he once more held out his hand to him, "but since those days, you see, I have won the great prize; but you know that well enough."

Then he rubbed his hands and cried cheerily: "This *will* be a surprise! You are the last person she expects to see."

[1] This form of salutation is especially common in the south of Germany.

"A surprise?" asked [illegible]rd "For whom, pray?"

"Why, for Elisabeth."

"Elisabeth [illegible] told her a word about my visit?"

"Not a word, brother [illegible]hard; she has no thought of you, nor her mother either. I invited you entirely on the quiet, in order that the pleasure might be all the greater. You know I always had little quiet schemes of my own."

Reinhard turned thoughtful; he seemed to breathe more heavily the nearer they approached the house.

On the left side of the road the vineyards came to an end, and gave place to an extensive kitchen-garden, which reached almost as far as the lake-shore. The stork had meanwhile come to earth and was striding solemnly between the vegetable beds.

"Hullo!" cried Eric, clapping his hands together, "if that long-legged Egyptian isn't stealing my short pea-sticks again!"

The bird slowly rose and flew on to the roof of a new building, which ran along the end of the kitchen-garden, and whose walls were covered with the branches of the peach and apricot trees that were trained over them.

"That's the distillery," said Eric. "I built it only two years ago. My late father had the farm buildings rebuilt; the dwelling-house was built as far back as my grandfather's time. So we go ever forward a little bit at a time."

Talking thus they came to a wide, open space, enclosed at the sides by farm-buildings, and in the rear by the manor-house, the two wings of which were connected by a high garden wall. Behind this wall ran dark hedges of yew trees, while here and there syringa trees trailed their blossoming branches over into the courtyard.

Men with faces scorched by the sun and heated with toil were walking over the open space and gave a greeting to the two friends, while Eric called out to one or another of them some order or question about their day's work.

By this time they had reached the house. They entered a high, cool vestibule, at the far end of which they turned to the left into a somewhat darker passage.

Here Eric opened a door and they passed into a spacious room that opened into a garden. The heavy mass of leafage that covered the opposite windows filled this room at either end with a green twilight, while between the windows two lofty wide-open folding-doors let in the full glow of spring sunshine, and afforded a view into a garden, laid out with circular flower-beds and steep hedgerows and divided by a straight, broad path, along which the eye roamed out on to the lake and away over the woods growing on the opposite shore.

As the two friends entered, a breath of wind bore in upon them a perfect stream of fragrance.

On a terrace in front of the door leading to the garden sat a girlish figure dressed in white. She rose and came to meet the two friends as they entered, but half-way she stood stock-still as if rooted to the spot and stared at the stranger. With a smile he held out his hand to her.

"Reinhard!" she cried. "Reinhard! Oh! is it you? It is such a long time since we have seen each other."

"Yes, a long time," he said, and not a word more could he utter; for on hearing her voice he felt a keen, physical pain at his heart, and as he looked up to her, there she stood before him, the same slight, graceful figure to whom he had said farewell years ago in the town where he was born.

Eric had stood back by the door, with joy beaming from his eyes.

"Now, then, Elisabeth," he said, "isn't he really the very last person in the world you would have expected to see?"

Elisabeth looked at him with the eyes of a sister. "You are so kind, Eric," she said.

He took her slender hand caressingly in his. "And now

that we have him," he said, "we shall not be in a hurry to let him go. He has been so long away abroad, we will try to make him feel at home again. Just see how foreign-looking he has become, and what a distinguished appearance he has!"

Elisabeth shyly scanned Reinhard's face. "The time that we have been separated is enough to account for that," she said.

At this moment in at the door came her mother, key-basket on arm.

"Herr Werner!" she cried, when she caught sight of Reinhard; "ah! you are as dearly welcome as your are unexpected."

And so the conversation went smoothly on with questions and answers. The ladies sat over their work, and while Reinhard enjoyed the refreshment that had been prepared for him, Eric had lighted his huge meershaum pipe and sat smoking and conversing by his side.

Next day Reinhard had to go out with him to see the fields, the vineyards, the hop-garden, the distillery. It was all well appointed; the people who were working on the land or at the vats all had a healthy and contented look.

For dinner the family assembled in the room that opened into the garden, and the day was spent more or less in company just according to the leisure of the host and hostess. Only during the hours preceding the evening meal, as also during the early hours of the forenoon, did Reinhard stay working in his own room.

For some years past, whenever he could come across them, he had been collecting the rhymes and songs that form part of the life of the people, and now set about arranging his treasure, and wherever possible increasing it by means of fresh records from the immediate neighbourhood.

Elisabeth was at all times gentle and kind. Eric's constant attentions she received with an almost humble gratitude, and Reinhard thought at whiles that the gay, cheerful

child of bygone days had given promise of a somewhat less sedate womanhood.

Ever since the second day of his visit he had been wont of an evening to take a walk along the shore of the lake. The road led along close under the garden. At the end of the latter, on a projecting mound, there was a bench under some tall birch trees. Elisabeth's mother had christened it the Evening Bench, because the spot faced westward, and was mostly used at that time of the day in order to enjoy a view of the sunset.

One evening Reinhard was returning from his walk along this road when he was overtaken by the rain. He sought shelter under one of the linden trees that grew by the water-side, but the heavy drops were soon pelting through the leaves. Wet through as he was he resigned himself to his fate and slowly continued his homeward way.

It was almost dark; the rain fell faster and faster. As he drew near to the Evening Bench he fancied he could make out the figure of a woman dressed in white standing among the gleaming birch tree trunks. She stood motionless, and, as far as he could make out on approaching nearer, with her face turned in his direction, as if she was expecting some one.

He thought it was Elisabeth. But when he quickened his pace in order that he might catch up to her and then return together with her through the garden into the house, she turned slowly away and disappeared among the dark side-paths.

He could not understand it; he was almost angry with Elisabeth, and yet he doubted whether it had really been she. He was, however, shy of questioning her about it—nay, he even avoided going into the garden-room on his return to the house for fear he should happen to see Elisabeth enter through the garden-door.

Some days later, as evening was already closing in, the family was, as usual at this time of the day, sitting all together in their garden-room. The doors stood wide open, and the sun had already sunk behind the woods on the far side of the lake.

Reinhard was invited to read some folk-songs which had been sent to him that afternoon by a friend who lived away in the country. He went up to his room and soon returned with a roll of papers which seemed to consist of detached neatly written pages.

So they all sat down to the table, Elisabeth beside Reinhard. "We shall read them at random," said the latter, "I have not yet looked through them myself."

Elisabeth unrolled the manuscript. "Here's some music," she said, "you must sing it, Reinhard."

To begin with he read some Tyrolese ditties,[1] and as he read on he would now and then hum one or other of the lively melodies. A general feeling of cheeriness pervaded the little party. "And who, pray, made all these pretty songs?" asked Elisabeth.

"Oh," said Eric, "you can tell that by listening to the rubbishy things—tailors' apprentices and barbers and such-like merry folk."

Reinhard said: "They are not made; they grow, they drop from the clouds, they float over the land like gossamer,[2] hither and thither, and are sung in a thousand places at the same time. We discover in these songs our very inmost

[1] Dialectal for *Schnitterhupfen*, *i.e.* "reapers' dances," sung especially in the Tyrol and in Bavaria.

[2] These fine cobwebs, produced by field-spiders, have always in the popular mind been connected with the gods. After the advent of Christianity they were connected with the Virgin Mary. The shroud in which she was wrapped after her death was believed to have been woven of the very finest thread, which during her ascent to Heaven frayed away from her body.

activities and sufferings: it is as if we all had helped to write them."

He took up another sheet: "I stood on the mountain height [1] . . ."

"I know that one," cried Elisabeth; "begin it, do, Reinhard, and I will help you out."

So they sang that famous melody, which is so mysterious that one can hardly believe that it was ever conceived by the heart of man, Elisabeth with her slightly clouded contralto taking the second part to the young man's tenor.

The mother meanwhile sat busy with her needlework, while Eric listened attentively, with one hand clasped in the other. The song finished, Reinhard laid the sheet on one side in silence. Up from the lake-shore came through the evening calm the tinkle of the cattle bells; they were all listening without knowing why, and presently they heard a boy's clear voice singing:

I stood on the mountain height
And viewed the deep valley beneath . .

Reinhard smiled. "Do you hear that now? So it passes from mouth to mouth."

"It is often sung in these parts," said Elisabeth.

"Yes," said Eric, "it is Casper the herdsman; he is driving the heifers [2] home."

They listened a while longer until the tinkle of the bells died away behind the farm buildings. "These melodies are as old as the world," said Reinhard; "they slumber in the depths of the forest; God knows who discovered them."

He drew forth a fresh sheet.

It had now grown darker; a crimson evening glow lay like foam over the woods in the farther side of the lake. Reinhard unrolled the sheet, Elisabeth caught one side of it

[1] An ancient folk-song which treats of a beautiful but poor maiden, who, being unable to marry "the young count," retired to a convent.

[2] *Starke* is the southern dialect word for *Färse*, "young cow," heifer."

in her hand, and they both examined it together. Then Reinhard read:

By my Mother's hard decree
Another's wife I needs must be;
Him on whom my heart was set,
Him, alas! I must forget;
My heart protesting, but not free.

Bitterly did I complain
That my mother brought me pain.
What mine honour might have been,
That is turned to deadly sin.
Can I ever hope again?

For my pride what can I show,
And my joy, save grief and woe?
Ah! could I undo what's done,
O'er the moor scorched by the sun
Beggarwise I'd gladly go.

During the reading of this Reinhard had felt an imperceptible quivering of the paper; and when he came to an end Elisabeth gently pushed her chair back and passed silently out into the garden. Her mother followed her with a look. Eric made as if to go after, but the mother said: "Elisabeth has one or two little things to do outside," so he remained where he was.

But out of doors the evening brooded darker and darker over garden and lake. Moths whirred past the open doors through which the fragrance of flower and bush floated in increasingly; up from the water came the croak of the frogs, under the windows a nightingale commenced his song answered by another from within the depths of the garden; the moon appeared over the tree-tops.

Reinhard looked for a little while longer at the spot where Elisabeth's sweet form had been lost to sight in the thick-foliaged garden paths, and then he rolled up his manuscript, bade his friends good-night and passed through the house down to the water.

The woods stood silent and cast their dark shadow far out over the lake, while the centre was bathed in the haze

of a pale moonlight. Now and then a gentle rustle trembled through the trees, though wind there was none: it was but the breath of summer night.

Reinhard continued along the shore. A stone's throw from the land he perceived a white water-lily. All at once he was seized with the desire to see it quite close, so he threw off his clothes and entered the water. It was quite shallow; sharp stones and water plants cut his feet, and yet he could not reach water deep enough for him to swim in.

Then suddenly he stepped out of his depth: the waters swirled above him, and it was some time before he rose to the surface again. He struck out with hands and feet and swam about in a circle until he had made quite sure from what point he had entered the water. And soon too he saw the lily again floating lonely among the large, gleaming leaves.

He swam slowly out, lifting every now and then his arms out of the water so that the drops trickled down and sparkled in the moonlight. Yet the distance between him and the flower showed no signs of diminishing, while the shore, as he glanced back at it, showed behind him in a hazy mist that ever deepened. But he refused to give up the venture and vigorously continued swimming in the same direction.

At length he had come so near the flower that he was able clearly to distinguish the silvery leaves in the moonlight; but at the same time he felt himself entangled in a net formed by the smooth stems of the water plants which swayed up from the bottom and wound themselves round his naked limbs

The unfamiliar water was black all round about him, and behind him he heard the sound of a fish leaping. Suddenly such an uncanny feeling overpowered him in the midst of this strange element that with might and main he tore asunder the network of plants and swam back to land in breathless haste. And when from the shore he looked back

upon the lake, there floated the lily on the bosom of the darkling water as far away and as lonely as before.

He dressed and slowly wended his way home. As he passed out of the garden into the room he discovered Eric and the mother busied with preparations for a short journey which had to be undertaken for business purposes on the morrow.

"Where ever have you been so late in the dark?" the mother called out to him.

"I?" he answered; "oh, I wanted to pay a call on the water-lily, but I failed."

"That's beyond the comprehension of any man," said Eric. "What on earth had you to do with the water-lily?"

"Oh, I used to be friends with the lily once," said Reinhard; "but that was long ago."

Elisabeth

The following afternoon Reinhard and Elisabeth went for a walk on the farther side of the lake, strolling at times through the woodland, at other times along the shore where it jutted out into the water. Elisabeth had received injunctions from Eric, during the absence of himself and her mother to show Reinhard the prettiest views in the immediate neighbourhood, particularly the view toward the farm itself from the other side of the lake. So now they proceeded from one point to another.

At last Elisabeth got tired and sat down in the shade of some overhanging branches. Reinhard stood opposite to her, leaning against a tree trunk; and as he heard the cuckoo calling farther back in the woods, it suddenly struck him that all this had happened once before. He looked at her and with an odd smile asked:

"Shall we look for strawberries?"

"It isn't strawberry time," she said.

"No, but it will soon be here."

Elisabeth shook her head in silence; then she rose and the two strolled on together. And as they wandered side by side, his eyes ever and again were bent toward her; for she walked gracefully and her step was light. He often unconsciously fell back a pace in order that he might feast his eyes on a full view of her.

So they came to an open space overgrown with heather where the view extended far over the country-side. Reinhard bent down and plucked a bloom from one of the little plants that grew at his feet. When he looked up again there was an expression of deep pain on his face.

"Do you know this flower?" he asked.

She gave him a questioning look. "It is an erica. I have often gathered them in the woods."

"I have an old book at home," he said; "I once used to write in it all sorts of songs and rhymes, but that is all over and done with long since. Between its leaves also there is an erica, but it is only a faded one. Do you know who gave it me?"

She nodded without saying a word; but she cast down her eyes and fixed them on the bloom which he held in his hand. For a long time they stood thus. When she raised her eyes on him again he saw that they were brimming over with tears.

"Elisabeth," he said, "behind yonder blue hills lies our youth. What has become of it?"

Nothing more was spoken. They walked dumbly by each other's side down to the lake. The air was sultry; to westward dark clouds were rising. "There's going to be a storm," said Elisabeth, hastening her steps. Reinhard nodded in silence, and together they rapidly sped along the shore till they reached their boat.

On the way across Elisabeth rested her hand on the gunwale of the boat. As he rowed Reinhard glanced along at her, but she gazed past him into the distance. And so his

glance fell downward and rested on her hand, and the white hand betrayed to him what her lips had failed to reveal.

It revealed those fine traces of secret pain that so readily mark a woman's fair hands, when they lie at nights folded across an aching heart. And as Elisabeth felt his glance resting on her hand she let it slip gently over the gunwale into the water.

On arriving at the farm they fell in with a scissors grinder's cart standing in front of the manor-house. A man with black, loosely-flowing hair was busily plying his wheel and humming a gipsy melody between his teeth, while a dog that was harnessed to the cart lay panting hard by. On the threshold stood a girl dressed in rags, with features of faded beauty, and with outstretched hand she asked alms of Elisabeth.

Reinhard thrust his hand into his pocket, but Elisabeth was before him, and hastily emptied the entire contents of her purse into the beggar's open palm. Then she turned quickly away, and Reinhard heard her go sobbing up the stairs.

He would fain have detained her, but he changed his mind and remained at the foot of the stairs. The beggar girl was still standing at the doorway, motionless, and holding in her hand the money she had received.

"What more do you want?" asked Reinhard.

She gave a sudden start: "I want nothing more," she said; then, turning her head toward him and staring at him with wild eyes, she passed slowly out of the door. He uttered a name, but she heard him not; with drooping head, with arms folded over her breast, she walked down across the farmyard:

> Then when death shall claim me,
> I must die alone.

An old song surged in Reinhard's ears, he gasped for breath;

a little while only, and then he turned away and went up to his chamber.

He sat down to work, but his thoughts were far afield. After an hour's vain attempt he descended to the parlour. Nobody was in it, only cool, green twilight; on Elisabeth's work-table lay a red ribbon which she had worn round her neck during the afternoon. He took it up in his hand, but it hurt him, and he laid it down again.

He could find no rest. He walked down to the lake and untied the boat. He rowed over the water and trod once again all the paths which he and Elisabeth had paced together but a short hour ago. When he got back home it was dark. At the farm he met the coachman, who was about to turn the carriage horses out into the pasture; the travellers had just returned.

As he came into the entrance hall he heard Eric pacing up and down the garden-room. He did not go in to him; he stood still for a moment, and then softly climbed the stairs and so to his own room. Here he sat in the arm-chair by the window. He made himself believe that he was listening to the nightingale's throbbing music in the garden hedges below, but what he heard was the throbbing of his own heart. Downstairs in the house every one went to bed, the night-hours passed, but he paid no heed.

For hours he sat thus, till at last he rose and leaned out of the open window. The dew was dripping among the leaves, the nightingale had ceased to trill. By degrees the deep blue of the darksome sky was chased away by a faint yellow gleam that came from the east; a fresh wind rose and brushed Reinhard's heated brow; the early lark soared triumphant up into the sky.

Reinhard suddenly turned and stepped up to the table. He groped about for a pencil and when he had found one he sat down and wrote a few lines on a sheet of white paper. Having finished his writing he took up hat and stick, and

leaving the paper behind him, carefully opened the door and descended to the vestibule.

The morning twilight yet brooded in every corner; the big house-cat stretched its limbs on the straw mat and arched its back against Reinhard's hand, which he unthinkingly held out to it. Outside in the garden the sparrows were already chirping their patter [1] from among the branches, and giving notice to all that the night was now past.

Then within the house he heard a door open on the upper floor; some one came downstairs, and on looking up he saw Elisabeth standing before him. She laid her hand upon his arm, her lips moved, but not a word did he hear.

Presently she said: "You will never come back. I know it; do not deny it; you will never come back."

"No, never," he said.

She let her hand fall from his arm and said no more. He crossed the hall to the door, then turned once more. She was standing motionless on the same spot and looking at him with lifeless eyes. He advanced one step and opened his arms toward her; then, with a violent effort, he turned away and so passed out of the door.

Outside the world lay bathed in morning light, the drops of pearly dew caught on the spiders' webs glistened in the first rays of the rising sun. He never looked back; he walked rapidly onward; behind him the peaceful farmstead gradually disappeared from view as out in front of him rose the great wide world.

. . . . . .

[1] Literally, "sang out pompously, like priests." The word seems to have been coined by the author. The English "patter" is derived from *Pater noster*, and seems an appropriate translation.

The Old Man

The moon had ceased to shine in through the window-panes, and it had grown quite dark; but the old man still sat in his arm-chair with folded hands and gazed before him into the emptiness of the room.

Gradually the murky darkness around him dissolved away before his eyes and changed into a broad dark lake; one black wave after another went rolling on farther and farther, and on the last one, so far away as to be almost beyond the reach of the old man's vision, floated lonely among its broad leaves a white water-lily.

The door opened, and a bright glare of light filled the room.

"I am glad that you have come, Bridget," said the old man. "Set the lamp upon the table."

Then he drew his chair up to the table, took one of the open books and buried himself in studies to which he had once applied all the strength of his youth.

GOTTFRIED KELLER
(1819–1890)

THE NAUGHTY SAINT VITALIS

(Translated by MARTIN WYNESS)

Be not familiar with any woman: but in general commend all good women to God.
Thomas à Kempis, *Imitatio* i. 8.

AT the beginning of the eighth century there lived in Alexandria of Egypt an extraordinary monk, by name Vitalis, who had made it his particular task to reclaim the souls of lost women from the ways of sin and lead them back to virtue. But the method which he pursued was so peculiar, and the fondness, nay enthusiasm with which he unceasingly prosecuted his ends, was alloyed with such remarkable self-abasement and simulation, that the like was scarcely ever known in the world.

He kept an exact roll of all those wantons on a neat slip of parchment, and, whenever he discovered a new quarry in the city or its environs, he immediately noted her name and dwelling on it; so that the naughty young patricians of Alexandria could have found no better guide than the industrious Vitalis, had he been disposed to harbour less saintly aims. As it was, the monk wormed out much news and information for his business from his sly and frivolous conversations with them; but he never suffered the scamps to pick up any information of the sort from him.

He carried this directory in his cowl, rolled up in a silver

case, and drew it out repeatedly to add a newly-discovered light name, or to run over those already inscribed, count them, and reckon which of the occupants should have her turn next.

Then he would seek her hurriedly and half ashamed, and say hastily, "Keep the night after to-morrow for me, and promise no one else!" When he entered the house at the appointed time, he would leave the fair one standing, and betake him to the farthest corner of the room, fall on his knees, and pray fervently and at the pitch of his voice all night long for the occupant of the house. In the early morning he would leave her, and charge her strictly not to tell any one what had passed between them.

So he went on for a good while, and got himself into very ill odour indeed. For while in secret, behind the closed doors of the wantons, he alarmed and touched many a lost woman by his fiery words of thunder and the fervent sweetness of his murmured prayers, so that she came to herself and began to lead a holy life; in the public eye, on the contrary, he appeared to have laid himself out of set purpose to merit the reputation of a vicious and sinful monk, who wallowed gleefully in all the debaucheries of the world, and flaunted his religious habit as a banner of shame.

If he found himself of an evening at dusk in respectable company, he would exclaim abruptly, "Oh! what am I about? I had almost forgotten that the brunette Doris is waiting for me, the little dear! The deuce! I must be off, or she will be vexed!"

If any one reproached him, he would cry out as if incensed, "Do you think that I am a stone? Do you imagine that God did not create a little woman for a monk?" If any one said, "Father, you would be better to lay aside your frock and marry, so as not to offend others," he would answer, "Let them be offended if they choose, and run their heads against a wall! Who is my judge?"

All this he used to say with great vehemence and all the

address of an actor, like one who defends a bad cause with a multitude of bold words.

And he would go off and quarrel with the other suitors before the girls' doors. He would even come to blows with them, and administered many a rude buffet when they said, "Away with the monk! Does the cleric mean to dispute the ground with us? Get out, bald-pate!"

But he was so obstinate and persistent that in most cases he got the better of them, and slipped into the house before they knew where they were.

When he returned to his cell in the grey of the morning, he would cast himself down before the Mother of God, to whose sole honour and praise he undertook those adventures and drew down on himself the world's blame; and, did he succeed in bringing back some lost lamb and placing her in some holy convent, he felt more blissful in the presence of Heaven's Queen than if he had converted a thousand heathen. For this was his very remarkable taste, to endure the martyrdom of appearing in the eye of the world as an unclean profligate, while all the time Our Undefiled Lady in Heaven was well aware that he had never touched a woman, and that he wore an invisible crown of white roses on his much-maligned head.

Once he heard of a peculiarly dangerous person, who by her beauty and unusual charms had occasioned much trouble, and even bloodshed, inasmuch as a ferocious military dandy laid siege to her door, and struck down all who attempted to dispute her possession with him. Vitalis immediately proposed the attack and conquest of this hell. He did not wait to write the fair sinner's name in his list, but went straight off to the notorious house, and at the door, sure enough, encountered the soldier, who was stalking along, clad in scarlet, and with a javelin in his hand.

"Dodge aside, monkling!" he shouted contemptuously to the pious Vitalis. "How dare you come sneaking about my lion's den? Heaven is your place; the world is ours!"

"Heaven and earth and all that therein is," said Vitalis, "belong to the Lord, and to his merry servants! Pack! you gaudy lout, and let me go where I choose."

The warrior wrathfully raised the shaft of his javelin to bring it down on the monk's pate; but he suddenly pulled out a peaceful olive-branch from beneath his frock, parried the blow, and smote the bully so roughly on the crown that he well-nigh lost his senses, after which the fighting cleric gave him several raps on the muzzle, until the soldier, completely dumbfounded, made off cursing.

Thereupon Vitalis forced his way triumphantly into the house, where, at the head of a narrow staircase, the woman stood with a light in her hand, listening to the noise and shouting. She was an uncommonly fine figure of a woman, with beautiful, strong but rather defiant, features, about which her reddish hair floated in abundant loose waves, like a lion's mane.

She looked down contemptuously on Vitalis as he ascended, and said, "Where are you going?" "To you, my dove!" he answered. "Have you never heard of the tender monk Vitalis, the jolly Vitalis?" But she answered harshly, as she blocked the staircase with her powerful figure, "Have you money, monk?" Disconcerted, he said, "Monks do not carry money about with them." "Then trot off," she said, "or I'll have you beaten out of the house with firebrands!"

Vitalis scratched his head, completely nonplussed, for he had never reckoned on this happening. The creatures whom he had hitherto converted had naturally thought no more of the price of iniquity, and those whom he failed to convert contented themselves with hard words in compensation for the precious time which he had made them lose. But here he could get no footing inside to begin his pious work; and yet there was something hugely attractive in the prospect of breaking in this red-haired daughter of Satan; for large and beautiful figures of men and women

always mislead the judgment, so that we attribute greater qualities to them than they really possess. In desperation he searched through his frock, and came upon the silver case, which was adorned with an amethyst of some value. "I have nothing but this," he said; "let me in for it!" She took the case, examined it carefully, then bade him come with her. Arrived at her bedchamber, he did not favour her with another glance; but knelt down in a corner after his custom, and began to pray aloud.

The harlot, who believed that from force of habit the holy man meant to begin his worldly performance with prayer, broke into uncontrollable laughter, and sat down on her couch to look at him, for his behaviour amused her monstrously. But as the business never came to an end, and was beginning to weary her, she bared her shoulders immodestly, went up to him, clasped him in her strong, white arms, and pressed the good Vitalis with his shorn and tonsured head so roughly against her breast that he was like to choke, and began to gasp as if the flames of purgatory had taken hold of him. But it did not last long; he began to kick out in all directions like a young horse in a smithy, until he freed himself from the hellish embrace. Then he took the long cord which he wore about his waist, and caught hold of the woman, to bind her hands behind her back, and have peace from her. He had to wrestle hard with her before he succeeded in tying her up. He bound her feet together as well, and threw the whole bundle with a mighty heave upon the bed; after which he betook himself to his corner again, and continued his prayers as if nothing had happened.

The captive lioness at first turned about angrily and restlessly, endeavouring to release herself, and uttered a hundred curses. Then she became quieter as the monk never ceased to pray, to preach, to adjure her, and towards morning she uttered manifest sighs, which, as it seemed, were soon followed by contrite sobbing. In short, when the sun rose,

she was lying like a Magdalene at his feet, released from her bonds, and bedewing the hem of his garment with tears. With dignity, yet with gladness, Vitalis stroked her head, and promised to pay her another visit as soon as it was dark, to inform her in what convent he had found a penitent's cell for her. Then he left, not forgetting first to impress upon her that she was to say nothing in the meantime about her conversion, but only tell any one who might enquire, that he had been very merry with her.

But judge of his surprise, when he reappeared at the appointed time, and found the door shut fast, and the female freshly bedizened in all her glory looking out of the window.

"What do you want, priest?" she cried down. And in astonishment he answered in an undertone, "What does this mean, my lamb? Put away those sinful baubles, and let me in to prepare you for your penance." "You want in to me, you naughty monk?" she said with a smile, as if she had misunderstood him. "Have you money, or money's worth, about you?" Vitalis stared up open-mouthed, then shook the door desperately; but it remained shut as fast as ever, and the woman too disappeared from the window.

At last the laughter and imprecations of the passers-by drove the apparently depraved and shameless monk away from the door of the house of ill fame. But his thought and endeavour ran entirely upon making his way into the house again, and finding some means or other to overcome the devil by which the woman was possessed.

Absorbed in such thoughts, he turned his steps to a church, where, instead of praying, he thought over ways and means by which he might contrive to gain access to the lost woman. While thus engaged, his eye fell upon the box in which the charitable offerings were kept, and scarcely was the church deserted (it had become dark), when he burst the box violently open with his fist, poured

the contents, which consisted of a lot of small silver coins, into his tucked-up frock, and hastened faster than any lover to the sinful woman's abode.

A foppish admirer was about to slip in at the opening door. Vitalis seized him from behind by his perfumed locks, flung him into the street, slammed the door in his face as he sprang in himself, and in another instant found himself once again in the presence of the disreputable person, who glared at him with flaming eyes when he appeared instead of her expected admirer. But Vitalis promptly poured the stolen money out on the table, saying, "Is that enough for to-night?" Without a word, but carefully, she counted the sum, said "It is enough!" and put it away.

Now they confronted each other in the strangest fashion. Biting her lips to restrain a laugh, she looked at him with a simulated air of utter ignorance; while the monk scrutinised her with undecided and anxious glances, not knowing how he should begin to bring her to book. But when she suddenly proceeded to alluring gestures, and made to stroke his dark, glossy beard, the storm of his saintly character broke out in all its fury, he struck her hand indignantly away, and flung her upon the couch so that it shook. Then kneeling upon her, and grasping her hands, unaffected by her charms, he began to speak home to her in such fashion that at last her obduracy seemed to soften.

She desisted from her violent struggles to free herself. Copious tears flowed over her strong and lovely features, and, when at length the zealous man of God released her, and stood erect beside her sinful couch, the great form lay upon it with weary, relaxed limbs, as if broken by repentance and remorse, sobbing and turning her tear-dimmed eyes upon him, as if in astonishment at her unwilling transformation.

Then the tempest of his eloquent wrath changed likewise to tender emotion and deep sympathy. In his heart he

gave praise to his Heavenly protectress, in whose honour this hardest of all his victories had been gained; and now his words of forgiveness and consolation flowed like the mild breath of spring over the broken ice of her heart.

More delighted than if he had enjoyed the sweetest favours of love, he hastened thence, not to snatch a brief slumber on his hard bed, but to throw himself down before the Virgin's altar, and pray for the poor repentant soul until the day had fully dawned. Then he vowed not to close an eye until the strayed lamb was finally safe within the shelter of the convent-walls.

The morning was scarcely astir when he was again on the way to her house. But he saw approaching at the same moment from the other end of the street the fierce warrior, who, after a riotous night, had taken it into his half-drunken head to wind up with a fresh conquest of the harlot.

Vitalis was the nearer to the unhallowed door, and he sprang nimbly forward to reach it. Thereupon the other hurled his spear at him, which buried itself just beside the monk's head in the door so that its shaft quivered. But, before it had ceased quivering, the monk wrenched it out of the wood with all his force, faced the infuriated soldier as he sprang towards him brandishing a naked sword, and quick as lightning drove the spear through his breast. The man sank in a heap, dead, and Vitalis was almost instantly seized and bound by a troop of soldiers, who were returning from the night-watch and had seen his deed, and he was led away to gaol.

In genuine anguish he looked back to the house, where he could no longer accomplish his good work. The watch thought that he was simply deploring his evil star which had baulked him of his wicked purpose, and treated the apparently incorrigible monk to blows and hard words until he was safely in ward.

He had to lie there for many days, and was several times brought before the judge. True, he was at length dis-

charged without punishment, seeing that he had killed the man in self-defence. But nevertheless he came out of the affair with the reputation of a homicide, and every one cried out that now, surely, they must unfrock him. But Bishop Joannes, who was then chief at Alexandria, must have had some inkling of the real state of affairs, or else have cherished some deeper design; for he declined to expel the disreputable monk from the clergy, and ordered that for the present he was to be allowed to continue his extraordinary career.

He lost no time in returning to the converted sinner, who in the interval had gone back to her old ways, and would not admit the horrified and distressed Vitalis until he had appropriated another object of value and brought it to her. She repented and converted a third, and likewise a fourth and fifth time, for she found these conversions more lucrative than anything else, and moreover the evil spirit in her found an infernal satisfaction in mocking the poor monk with an endless variety of devices and inventions.

As for him, he now became a veritable martyr inwardly and outwardly; for, the more cruelly he was deceived, the more he felt compelled to exert himself, and it seemed to him as if his own eternal welfare depended on the reformation of this one person. He was already a homicide, a violator of churches, a thief; but he would rather have cut off his hand than part with the least portion of his reputation as a profligate; and, though all this became harder and harder for his heart to bear, he strove all the more eagerly to maintain his wicked exterior in the world's eye by means of frivolous speech. For this was the special form of martyrdom which he had elected. All the same, he became pale and thin, and began to flit about like a shadow on the wall, though always with a laughing face.

Now over against that house of torment dwelt a rich Greek merchant who had an only daughter called Iole, who could do what she liked, and consequently never knew what

to do with herself all the livelong day. For her father, who was retired from business, studied Plato, and when tired of him he would compose neat epigrams on the ancient engraved gems of which he had a large collection; but Iole, when she had laid aside her music, could think of no outlet for her lively fancies, and would peep out restlessly at the sky and at the distance, from every peep-hole she found.

So it came about that she discovered the monk's coming and going in the street, and ascertained how matters stood with the notorious cleric. Startled and shy, she peeped at him from her safe concealment, and could not help commiserating his handsome form and manly appearance. When she learned from one of her maids, who was intimate with a maid of the wicked strumpet, how Vitalis was being deceived by her, and what was the real truth about him, she was amazed beyond measure, and, far from respecting his martyrdom, was overcome by a strange indignation, and considered this sort of holiness little conducive to the honour of her sex. She dreamed and puzzled over it a while, and became always the more displeased, while, at the same time, her partiality for the monk increased and conflicted with her wrath.

All of a sudden she resolved that if the Virgin Mary had not sense enough to lead the erring monk back to more respectable ways, she would undertake the task herself, and lend the Virgin a hand in the business, little dreaming that she was the unwitting instrument of the Queen of Heaven, who had now begun to intervene. Forthwith she went to her father, and complained bitterly to him of the unseemly proximity of the lady of pleasure, and adjured him to employ his wealth in getting her out of the way immediately, at any price.

In obedience to her directions, the old gentleman addressed himself to the person, and offered her a certain sum for her house, on condition that she handed it over at once, and left the neighbourhood entirely. She desired nothing

better; and that same forenoon she had disappeared from the quarter, while the old merchant was sitting once more over his Plato and had dismissed the whole affair from his mind.

Not so Iole, who was in the utmost eagerness to rid the house from top to bottom of every trace of its former occupant. When it was all swept and garnished, she had it fumigated with rare spices so that the fragrant clouds poured out from all the windows.

Then she furnished the empty room with nothing but a carpet, a rose-bush, and a lamp, and, as soon as her father, who went to bed with the sun, was asleep, she went across, with a wreath of roses adorning her hair, and took her seat alone on the outspread carpet, while two trusty old servants kept watch at the door.

They turned away several night-revellers, but, whenever they saw Vitalis approach, they hid themselves and allowed him to pass in unhindered by the open door. With many sighs, he climbed the stair, full of fear lest he should see himself made a fool of once again, full of hope that he might be freed at last from this burden by the genuine repentance of a creature who was hindering him from rescuing so many other souls. But judge of his astonishment, when he entered the room, and found it stripped of all the wild red lioness's trumpery, and instead of her a sweet and tender form sitting on the carpet with the rose-bush opposite her on the floor.

"Where is the wretched creature who used to live here?" he exclaimed, looking about him in wonder, and finally letting his eyes rest on the lovely apparition which he saw before him.

"She has gone out into the Desert," answered Iole, without looking up. "There she means to live as an anchorite and do penance. It came upon her suddenly this morning, and broke her like a straw, and her conscience is awakened at last. She cried out for a certain priest

Vitalis, who could have helped her. But the spirit which had entered into her would not suffer her to wait. The fool gathered all her possessions together, sold them, and gave the money to the poor, then went off hot-foot with a hair-cloth shift, and shorn hair, and a staff in her hand, the way of the Desert."

"Glory to thee, O Lord, and praise to thy Gracious Mother!" cried Vitalis, his hands folded in glad devotion, while a burden as of stone fell from his heart. But at the same time he looked more narrowly at the maiden with her rose-wreath, and said, "Why do you call her a fool? and who are you? and where do you come from? and what are you about?"

At that the lovely Iole cast her dark eyes to the ground lower than ever. She hung her head, and a bright flush of modesty spread over her face, for she thought shame of herself for the sad things she was going to say before a man.

"I am an outcast orphan, who have neither father nor mother. This lamp and carpet and rose-bush are the last remnants of my inheritance, and I have settled in this house with them to take up the life which my predecessor here has abandoned."

"Ah, so you would——!" the monk exclaimed, and clapped his hands. "Just see how busy the Devil is! And this innocent creature says the thing as indifferently as if I were not Vitalis! Now my kitten, how do you mean to do? Just tell me!"

"I mean to devote myself to love and serve the men as long as this rose lives!" she said, pointing hastily at the flower-pot. Still, she could hardly get the words out, and almost sank on the floor for shame, so deeply did she droop her head. This natural modesty served the little rogue well; for it convinced the monk that he had to do this time with a childish innocent, who was possessed by the Devil and was on the point of jumping plump into the abyss. He caressed his beard in satisfaction at having arrived on the

scene so opportunely for once, and, to enjoy his satisfaction still longer, he said slowly and jestingly, "Then afterwards, my dove?"

"Afterwards I will go, a poor lost soul, to Hell where beauteous Dame Venus is; or perhaps, if I meet a good preacher, I may even enter a convent later on, and do penance!"

"Better and better!" he cried. "That is an orderly plan of campaign, indeed, and not badly thought out. For, so far as the preacher is concerned, he is here now, he is standing before you, you black-eyed Devil's tit-bit! And the convent is all ready rigged up for you, like a mousetrap, only you'll go into it without having sinned, do you see? Without having sinned in anything but the pretty intention, which after all may make a very toothsome bone of repentance for you to gnaw all your days, and may serve your turn. For without it, you little witch, you would be too comical and light-hearted for a real penitent! But now!" he continued seriously, "first off with the roses, and then listen attentively!"

"No!" answered Iole, somewhat more pertly. "I will listen first, and then see whether I'll take off the roses. Now that I have once overcome my womanly feelings, mere words will not suffice to restrain me until I know the sin. And, without sin, I can know nothing about repentance. I give you this to think over before you begin your efforts. But still I am willing to hear you."

Then Vitalis began the finest exhortation he had ever delivered. The maiden listened good-naturedly and attentively, and the sight of her had, unknown to him, a considerable influence on his choice of language; for the beauty and daintiness of the prospective convert were themselves enough to evoke a lofty eloquence. But, as she was not the least bit in earnest about the project which she had so outrageously advertised, the monk's oration could not have any very serious effect upon her. On the contrary, a

charming laugh flitted about her mouth, and, when he had concluded, and expectantly wiped the sweat from his brow, Iole said, "I am only half moved by your words, and cannot decide to give up my project; for I am only too curious to know what it is like to live in sin and pleasure!"

Vitalis stood as if petrified, and could not get so much as one word out. It was the first time that his powers of conversion had failed so roundly. Sighing and thoughtful, he paced up and down the room, and took another look at the little candidate for Hell. The power of the Devil seemed to have combined in some bewildering fashion with the power of innocence to thwart him. But he was all the more passionately anxious to overcome them.

"I do not leave this place until you repent," he cried at length, "not though I should spend three days and three nights here!"

"That would only make me more obstinate," responded Iole. "But I will take time to think, and will hear you again to-morrow night. The day will soon be dawning now. Go your way. Meantime I promise to do nothing in the matter, and to remain in my present condition; in return for which you must promise on no account to mention me to anybody, and to come here only under cover of darkness."

"So be it!" exclaimed Vitalis, and took his departure; while Iole slipped quickly back into her father's house.

She did not sleep long, and awaited the coming evening with impatience. For the monk, now that he had been so close to her throughout the night, pleased her better than he had done at a distance. She saw now what a fire of enthusiasm glowed in his eyes, and how resolute all his movements were, despite his monkish garments. And when she represented to herself his self-abnegation, his perseverance in the course he had once chosen, she could not help wishing that those good qualities were utilised to her own pleasure and profit, in the shape of a cherished and faithful husband.

Her project, accordingly, was to make a brave martyr into a still better husband.

The next night she found Vitalis at her carpet in good time, and he continued his exertions on behalf of her virtue with undiminished zeal. He had to stand all the time, except when he knelt to pray. Iole, on the contrary, made herself comfortable. She laid herself back on the carpet, clasped her hands behind her head, and kept her half-closed eyes steadily fixed upon the monk as he stood and preached. Sometimes she closed them as if overcome by drowsiness, and, as soon as Vitalis saw this, he pushed her with his foot to waken her. But this harsh measure always turned out milder than he intended; for, as soon as his foot neared the maiden's slender side, it spontaneously moderated its force, and touched her tender ribs quite gently; not to mention that a most unusual sensation ran along the whole length of the monk, a sensation which he had never before experienced in the slightest degree from any of the numerous fair sinners with whom he had had to deal.

As morning approached, Iole nodded more and more frequently, till at last Vitalis exclaimed indignantly, "Child, you are not listening! I can't keep you awake. You are utterly sunk in sloth!"

"Not so!" she said, as she suddenly opened her eyes, and a sweet smile flitted across her face, as if the approaching day were already reflected in it. "I have been paying attention; I am beginning to hate that wretched sin, which is all the more repulsive to me that it causes you vexation, dear monk; for nothing could be pleasing to me that is displeasing to you."

"Really?" he queried, full of joy. "So I have really succeeded? Come away to the convent at once, that we may make sure of you. This time we'll strike while the iron's hot."

"You do not understand me aright," Iole answered, and, blushing, cast her eyes again to the ground. "I am

enamoured of you, and have conceived a tender inclination towards you!"

For a moment, Vitalis felt as if a hand had smitten his heart; yet he did not feel that it caused him pain. Paralysed, he opened wide his mouth and eyes, and stood stock-still.

But Iole, blushing redder than ever, went on to say gently and softly, "You must now lecture me and charm away this new mischief from me, in order to deliver me entirely from the malady, and I hope you may succeed!"

Vitalis, without saying a word, turned tail and ran out of the house. Instead of seeking his bed, he rushed out into the silvery grey morning, and debated whether he should leave this dangerous young woman to her fate and have done with her, or should endeavour to cast out this latest whim also, which appeared to be the most reprehensible of all her notions, and not altogether without danger to himself. But a wrathful flush of shame flew to his head at the thought that anything of the sort could be perilous for him. Then again it occurred to him that the Devil might have set a snare for him, in which case it were best to avoid it betimes. But to become a deserter in the face of such a wisp of a temptress! And supposing the poor creature were in earnest, and could be cured of her latest unseemly delusion by a few rough words? In short, Vitalis could not settle within himself, all the more that at the bottom of his heart a dim wave was beginning to cause the skiff of his reason to be unsteady.

In his perplexity he slipped into a little chapel where a beautiful ancient marble statue of the goddess Juno had recently been set up with a golden nimbus as an image of the Virgin Mary, so as not to waste such a gift of divine art. He cast himself down before this Mary, and laid his doubts fervently before her, and prayed his patroness for a token. If she nodded, he would complete Iole's conversion; if she shook her head, he would desist.

But the image left him in the most cruel uncertainty, and did neither one thing nor the other; it neither nodded nor shook its head. Only when the red gleam of some flying morning clouds passed over the marble, its face seemed to smile most propitiously; whether it was that the ancient goddess, as guardian deity of connubial love and chastity, was giving a sign, or that the new one could not refrain from smiling at her adorer's troubles; for both were women at heart, and such are always tickled when a love-affair is in train. But Vitalis knew nothing of all this. On the contrary, the beauty of the expression raised his courage amazingly, and, still more remarkable to relate, the statue appeared to assume the features of the blushing Iole, who was challenging him to expel her love of him from her mind.

Meantime, at the same hour, Iole's father was strolling beneath the cypresses of his garden. He had acquired some very fine new gems, the engraving on which had brought him out of bed at that early hour. He was handling them rapturously, and making them play in the beams of the rising sun. There was a dark amethyst, on which Luna drove her car through the heavens, unwitting that Love was squatted behind her, while flying Cupids called to her the Greek for "Whip behind!" A handsome onyx showed Minerva lost in meditation, holding Love on her knee, who was busy polishing her breast-plate with his hand to see his own reflection.

And lastly, on a cornelian, Love, in the form of a salamander, was tumbling about in a vestal fire and throwing its guardian virgins into perplexity and alarm.

These scenes tempted the old man to compose some distichs, and he was considering which he should attack first when his daughter Iole came through the garden, pale and unslept. Anxious and surprised, he called her to him and inquired what had robbed her of her slumbers. But, before she could answer, he began to show her his gems and explain them to her.

At that she heaved a deep sigh and said, "Ah, if all those great powers, Chastity herself, Wisdom, and Religion, could not defend themselves against Love, how is a poor insignificant creature like me to fortify herself against him?"

The old gentleman was not a little astonished at these words. "What do I hear?" he said. "Is it that the dart of mighty Eros has smitten thee?"

"It has pierced me to the heart," she responded, "and, if I am not in possession of the man whom I love within a day and a night, I shall be the bride of Death!"

Although her father was accustomed to let her have her own way in everything she desired, this haste was rather too violent for him, and he recommended repose and reflection to his daughter. But she had no lack of the latter, and she employed it so well that the old man exclaimed, "So I must discharge the most unpleasant of all a father's duties, I must go to your choice, to your man, and lead him by the nose up to the best that I can call mine, and beg him to be so kind as to take possession? Here is a tidy little woman, my dear sir! I pray you, don't despise her! I had much rather give you a box or two on the ear, but my little daughter will die, so I must be civil! So be graciously pleased, for Heaven's sake, to taste the pasty which is offered you. It has been well baked, and will fairly melt in your mouth!"

"All that is spared us," said Iole, "for, if you will only allow me, I hope to bring him to it that he will come himself and ask for my hand."

"And what if this man, whom I know nothing of, turns out to be a wastrel and a good-for-nothing?"

"Then let him be driven away with scorn! But he is a saint!"

"Then run away, and leave me to the Muses," said the good old man.

When evening came, the night did not follow the dusk so promptly as Vitalis appeared at Iole's heels in the familiar

house. But he had never entered the house in the same fashion as now. His heart beat, and he was forced to feel what it meant to see again a person who had played such a trump. It was another Vitalis than the one who had descended in the early morning, who now came up the steps, although he himself was the most unconscious of the fact; for the poor converter of frail women and monk of evil renown had never learned the difference between the smile of a harlot and that of an honourable woman.

Yet he came with the best of intentions, and with the old purpose of driving all the idle notions out of the little monster's head for good and all. Only he had a vague idea that once his task was accomplished he might be permitted a pause in his martyr activity; all at once he began to be very tired of it.

But it was determined that some new surprise should always await him in that enchanted dwelling. When he entered the room, he found it beautifully decorated, and furnished with all usual furniture. A delicate, insidious odour of flowers pervaded the room, and was in keeping with a certain modest worldliness. On a snow-white couch, not a fold out of place in its silk coverings, sat Iole, splendidly arrayed, in sweet troubled melancholy, like an angel in meditation. Under the trim pleats of her robe her bosom heaved like the foam on a milking pail, and, though the white arms, which she folded beneath her breast, shone so fair, yet all those charms looked so lawful and permissible in the order of things that Vitalis's accustomed eloquence stuck in his throat.

"You are amazed, my pretty monk," began Iole, "to find all this show and finery here! Know that this is the farewell which I mean to take of the world, and, at the same time, I will lay aside the inclination which, unfortunately, I cannot help feeling for you. But you must help me to this end to the best of your ability, and after the fashion that I have devised and request of you. I mean that when you

address me in these garments and as a cleric it is always the same. The bearing of a churchman fails to convince me, for I belong to the world. I cannot be cured of love by a monk, who is unacquainted with love, and does not know what he is talking about. If you really mean to afford me rest and put me on the way to Heaven, go into that closet, where you will find secular clothes laid out ready for you. Exchange your monk's clothes there for them, array yourself like a man of the world, then seat yourself beside me to partake of a little repast with me, and in such worldly externals exert all your acuteness and understandng to wean me from you and incline me to piety."

Vitalis made no reply, but bethought himself a while. Then he decided to end all his difficulties at one stroke, and to put the devil of this world to flight with his own weapons by acceding to Iole's eccentric proposal.

So he actually betook himself into an adjoining closet, where a couple of servants awaited him with splendid garments of purple and fine linen. Scarcely had he put them on, when he looked a good head taller, and it was with a noble mien that he strode back to Iole, who could not take her eyes off him, and clapped her hands for joy.

Now, however, a real miracle and a strange transformation was wrought on the monk. For scarcely had he sat down in his worldly array beside the charming woman, when the immediate past was blown away like a dream from his mind, and he forgot all about his purpose. Instead of speaking so much as a word, he listened eagerly to what was said by Iole, who had taken possession of his hand and begun to tell him her true story, who she was, where she lived, and how it was her most heart-felt desire that he should give over his strange manner of life, and ask her father for her hand, so that he might become a good husband, well-pleasing to God. She also said many wonderful things in the most beautiful words about the history of a happy and chaste love, but concluded with a sigh that she

saw well how hopeless her desire was, and that he was now at liberty to argue her out of all those ideas, but not before he had fortified himself duly for his task with meat and drink.

Then at her signal the servants set drinking-vessels on the table together with a basket of cakes and fruits. Iole mixed a goblet of wine for the silent Vitalis, and affectionately handed him something to eat, so that he felt quite at home, and was reminded of his childhood, when as a little boy he was tenderly fed by his mother. He ate and drank, and, when he had done so, it seemed to him as if he might now venture to rest from his long, weary toil, and lo! our Vitalis leant his head to one side, towards Iole, and without more ado fell asleep, and lay till sunrise.

When he awoke, he was alone, and no one was to be seen or heard. He sprang up hastily, and was horrified at the splendid garment in which he was dressed. He rushed madly through the house from top to bottom, seeking for his monk's frock. But not the smallest trace of it could he find, until he chanced to see a little heap of cinders and ashes, on which a sleeve of his priest's dress was lying half consumed, whereupon he rightly concluded that there it had been solemnly burned.

Next he put his head out cautiously, first at one, then at another of the windows which looked on to the street, drawing it in every time that any one approached. At last he flung himself down upon the silken couch as comfortable and at ease as if he had never lain on a monk's hard bed. Then he roused himself, put his dress straight, and stole in high excitement to the street-door. There he still hesitated a moment; but suddenly he flung it wide open, and went out into the world a magnificent and imposing figure. No one recognised him; every one took him for some fine gentleman from abroad, who was enjoying a few gay days at Alexandria.

He looked neither to right nor left, else he would have seen Iole on her house-top. So he went straight back to

his convent, where, however, all the monks and their superior had just resolved to expel him from their fellowship; for the measure of his iniquities was now full, and he contributed only to the scandal and disgrace of the Church. The sight of him, actually coming among them in his worldly gallant's attire, knocked the bottom out of the tub of their patience; they drenched him and doused him with water from all sides, and drove him with crosses, besoms, pitchforks and kitchen-ladles out of the convent.

Once on a time this rough handling would have been the height of felicity to him, and a triumph of his martyrdom. True, he laughed inwardly even now, but for a somewhat different reason. He took one more stroll round about the city-walls, and let his red cloak wave in the wind. A fine breeze from the Holy Land blew across the sparkling sea; but Vitalis was becoming more and more worldly-minded. Suddenly he retraced his steps into the bustling streets of the city, sought the house where Iole dwelt, and did what she wished.

He now made as excellent and complete a layman and husband as he had been a martyr. The Church, however, when she understood the real facts of the case, was inconsolable over the loss of such a saint, and made every endeavour to recall the fugitive to her bosom. But Iole held him fast and gave it to be understood that he was in very good hands with her.

PAUL HEYSE

(Born 1830)

L'ARRABIATA

(Translated by Mary Wilson)

The day had scarcely dawned.—Over Vesuvius hung one broad grey stripe of mist, stretching across as far as Naples, and darkening all the small towns along the coast. The sea lay calm. But about the marina of the narrow creek, that lies beneath the Sorrento cliffs, fishermen and their wives were at work already, with giant cables drawing their boats to land and the nets that had been cast the night before. Others were rigging their craft, trimming the sails, and fetching out oars and masts from the great grated vaults that have been built deep into the rocks for shelter to the tackle over-night. Nowhere an idle hand; even the very aged, who had long given up going to sea, fell into the long chain of those who were hauling in the nets. Here and there, on some flat housetop, an old woman stood and span, or busied herself about her grandchildren, whom their mother had left to help her husband.

"Do you see, Rachela? yonder is our Padre Curato," said one, to a little thing of ten, who brandished a small spindle by her side; "Antonio is to row him over to Capri. Madre Santissima! but the reverend signor's eyes are dull with sleep!" and she waved her hand to a benevolent-looking little priest, who was settling himself in the boat, and spreading out upon the bench his carefully tucked-up skirts.

The men upon the quay had dropped their work to see their pastor off, who bowed and nodded kindly, right and left.

"What for must he go to Capri, Granny?" asked the child. "Have the people there no priest of their own, that they must borrow ours?"

"Silly thing!" returned the granny. "Priests they have, in plenty—and the most beautiful of churches, and a hermit too, which is more than we have. But there lives a great Signora, who once lived here; she was so very ill! —Many's the time our Padre had to go and take the Most Holy to her, when they thought she could not live the night. But with the Blessed Virgin's help, she did get strong and well—and was able to bathe every day in the sea. When she went away, she left a fine heap of ducats behind her, for our church, and for the poor; and she would not go, they say, until our Padre promised to go and see her over there, that she might confess to him as before. It is quite wonderful, the store she lays by him!—Indeed, and we have cause to bless ourselves for having a curato who has gifts enough for an archbishop, and is in such request with all the great folks. The Madonna be with him!" she cried, and waved her hand again, as the boat was about to put from shore.

"Are we to have fair weather, my son?" inquired the little priest, with an anxious look towards Naples.

"The sun is not yet up," the young man answered: "When he comes, he will easily do for that small trifle of mist."

"Off with you, then! that we may arrive before the heat."

Antonio was just reaching for his long oar to shove away the boat when suddenly he paused, and fixed his eyes upon the summit of the steep path that leads down from Sorrento to the water.

A tall and slender girlish figure had become visible upon

the heights, and was now hastily stepping down the stones, waving her pocket handkerchief.

She had a small bundle under her arm, and her dress was mean and poor. Yet she had a distinguished, if somewhat savage way of throwing back her head; and the dark tress that wreathed it, on her, was like a diadem.

"What have we to wait for?" inquired the curato.

"There is some one coming who wants to go to Capri. With your permission, Padre. We shall not go a whit the slower. It is a slight young thing, but just eighteen."

At that moment the young girl appeared from behind the wall that bounds the winding path.

"Laurella!" cried the priest; "and what has she to do in Capri?"

Antonio shrugged his shoulders. She came up with hasty steps, her eyes fixed straight before her.

"Ha! l'Arrabiata! good-morning!" shouted one or two of the young boatmen. But for the curato's presence they might have added more; the look of mute defiance with which the young girl received their welcome appeared to tempt the more mischievous among them.

"Good-day, Laurella!" now said the priest. "How are you? Are you coming with us to Capri?"

"If I may, Padre."

"Ask Antonio there, the boat is his. Every man is master of his own, I say; as God is Master of us all."

"There is half a carlin, if I may go for that," said Laurella, without looking at the young boatman.

"You need it more than I," he muttered, and pushed aside some orange-baskets to make room: he was to sell the oranges in Capri, which little isle of rocks has never been able to grow enough for all its visitors.

"I do not choose to go for nothing," said the young girl, with a slight frown of her dark eyebrows.

"Come, child," said the priest; "he is a good lad, and had rather not enrich himself with that little morsel of your

poverty. Come now, and step in"—and he stretched out his hand to help her—"and sit you down by me. See now, he has spread his jacket for you, that you may sit the softer; young folks are all alike; for one little maiden of eighteen they will do more than for ten of us reverend fathers. Nay, no excuse, 'Tonino. It is the Lord's own doing, that like and like should hold together."

Meantime Laurella had stepped in and seated herself beside the Padre, first putting away Antonio's jacket without a word. The young fellow let it lie, and muttering between his teeth, he gave one vigorous push against the pier, and the little boat flew out into the open bay.

"What are you carrying there in that little bundle?" inquired the Padre, as they were floating on over a calm sea, now just beginning to be lighted up with the earliest rays of the rising sun.

"Silk, thread, and a loaf, Padre. The silk is to be sold at Anacapri, to a woman who makes ribbons, and the thread to another."

"Self-spun?"

"Yes, sir."

"You once learned to weave ribbons yourself, if I remember right?"

"I did, sir, only Mother has been much worse, and I cannot stay so long from home; and a loom to ourselves we are not rich enough to buy."

"Worse, is she? Ah! dear, dear! when I was with you last, at Easter, she was up."

"The spring is always her worst time. Ever since those last great storms and the earthquakes she has been forced to keep her bed from pain."

"Pray, my child. Never grow slack of prayers and petitions, that the blessed Virgin may intercede for you; and be industrious and good, that your prayers may find a hearing."

After a pause: "When you were coming toward the

shore I heard them calling after you: 'Good morning, l'Arrabiata!' they said. What made them call you so? It is not a nice name for a young Christian maiden, who should be meek and mild."

The young girl's brown face glowed all over, while her eyes flashed fire.

"They always mock me so, because I do not dance and sing and stand about to chatter, as other girls do. I might be left in peace, I think; I do *them* no harm."

"Nay, but you might be civil. Let others dance and sing, on whom this life sits lighter, but a kind word now and then is seemly even from the most afflicted."

Her dark eyes fell, and she drew her eyebrows closer over them, as if she would have hidden them.

They went on a while in silence. The sun now stood resplendent above the mountain chain; only the tip of Mount Vesuvius towered beyond the group of clouds that had gathered about its base. And on the Sorrento plains the houses were gleaming white from the dark green of their orange-gardens.

"Have you heard no more of that painter, Laurella?" asked the curato; "that Neapolitan who wished so much to marry you?" She shook her head. "He came to make a picture of you. Why would you not let him?"

"What did he want it for? there are handsomer girls than I;—who knows what he would have done with it?—he might have bewitched me with it, or hurt my soul, or even killed me, Mother says."

"Never believe such sinful things!" said the little curato very earnestly. "Are not you ever in God's keeping, without Whose will not one hair of your head can fall? And is one poor mortal with an image in his hand to prevail against the Lord? Besides, you might have seen that he was fond of you; else why should he want to marry you?"

She said nothing.

"And wherefore did you refuse him? He was an honest

man,' they say, and a comely; and he would have kept you and your mother far better than you ever can yourself, for all your spinning and silk winding."

"We are so poor!" she said passionately; "and Mother has been ill so long, we should have become a burthen to him; and then I never should have done for a Signora. When his friends came to see him he would only have been ashamed of me."

"How can you say so? I tell you the man was good and kind—he would even have been willing to settle in Sorrento. It will not be so easy to find another, sent straight from Heaven to be the saving of you, as this man, indeed, appeared to be."

"I want no husband—I never shall," she said, very stubbornly, half to herself.

"Is this a vow? Or do you mean to be a nun?"

She shook her head.

"The people are not so wrong who call you wilful, although the name they give you is not kind. Have you ever considered that you stand alone in the world, and that your perverseness must make your sick mother's illness worse to bear, her life more bitter? And what sound reason can you have to give for rejecting an honest hand, stretched out to help you and your mother? Answer me, Laurella."

"I have a reason," she said, reluctantly, and speaking low; "but it is one I cannot give."

"Not give! not give to me? not to your confessor, whom you surely know to be your friend—or is he not?"

Laurella nodded.

"Then, child, unburthen your heart. If your reason be a good one, I shall be the very first to uphold you in it. Only you are young, and know so little of the world. A time may come when you may find cause to regret a chance of happiness, thrown away for some foolish fancy now."

Shyly she threw a furtive glance over to the other end

of the boat, where the young boatman sat, rowing fast. His woollen cap was pulled deep down over his eyes; he was gazing far across the water, with averted head, sunk, as it appeared, in his own meditations.

The priest observed her look, and bent his ear down closer.

"You did not know my father?" she whispered, while a dark look gathered in her eyes.

"Your father, child! Why, your father died when you were ten years old! What can your father (Heaven rest his soul in Paradise!) have to do with this present perversity of yours?"

"You did not know him, Padre; you did not know that Mother's illness was caused by him alone."

"And how?"

"By his ill treatment of her: he beat her, and trampled upon her. I well remember the nights when he came home in his fits of frenzy—she never said a word, and did everything he bid her. Yet he would beat her so my heart felt like to break. I used to cover up my head and pretend to be asleep, but I cried all night. And then, when he saw her lying on the floor, quite suddenly he would change, and lift her up and kiss her, till she screamed and said he smothered her. Mother forbade me ever to say a word of this; but it wore her out. And in all these long years since Father died she has never been able to get well again. And if she should soon die, which God forbid! I know who it was that killed her."

The little curato's head wagged slowly to and fro; he seemed uncertain how far to acquiesce in the young girl's reasons. At length he said: "Forgive him, as your mother has forgiven!—And turn your thoughts from such distressing pictures, Laurella; there may be better days in store for you, which will make you forget the past."

"Never shall I forget that!" she said, and shuddered; "and you must know, Padre, it is the reason why I have

resolved to remain unmarried. I never will be subject to a man, who may beat and then caress me. Were a man how to want to beat or kiss me I could defend myself; but Mother could not: neither from his blows or kisses, because she loved him. Now I will never so love a man as to be made ill and wretched by him."

"You are but a child; and you talk like one who knows nothing at all of life. Are all men like that poor father of yours? Do all ill-treat their wives, and give vent to every whim and gust of passion? Have you never seen a good man yet, or known good wives, who live in peace and harmony with their husbands?"

"But nobody ever knew how Father was to Mother—she would have died sooner than complained, or told of him—and all because she loved him. If this be love—if love can close our lips when they should cry out for help; if it is to make us suffer without resistance, worse than even our worst enemy could make us suffer—then I say I never will be fond of mortal man."

"I tell you you are childish; you know not what you are saying. When your time comes you are not likely to be consulted whether you choose to fall in love or not." After a pause: "And that painter, did you think he could have been cruel?"

"He made those eyes I have seen my father make when he begged my mother's pardon and took her in his arms to make it up—I know those eyes. A man may make such eyes, and yet find it in his heart to beat a wife who never did a thing to vex him! It made my flesh creep to see those eyes again."

After this she would not say another word. Also the curato remained silent. He bethought himself of more than one wise saying wherewith the maiden might have been admonished; but he refrained, in consideration of the young boatman, who had been growing rather restless towards the close of this confession.

When, after two hours' rowing, they reached the little bay of Capri, Antonio took the padre in his arms, and carried him through the last few ripples of shallow water to set him reverently down upon his legs on dry land. But Laurella did not wait for him to wade back and fetch her. Gathering up her little petticoat, holding in one hand her wooden shoes, and in the other her little bundle, with one splashing step or two she had reached the shore. "I have some time to stay at Capri," said the priest. "You need not wait—I may not perhaps return before to-morrow. When you get home, Laurella, remember me to your mother; I will come and see her within the week. You mean to go back before it gets dark?"

"If I find an opportunity," answered the young girl, turning all her attention to her skirts.

"I must return, you know," said Antonio, in a tone which he believed to be of great indifference. "I shall wait here till the Ave Maria; if you should not come, it is the same to me."

"You must come," interposed the little priest: "you never can leave your mother all alone at night. Is it far you have to go?"

"To a vineyard by Anacapri."

"And I to Capri, so now God bless you, child—and you, my son."

Laurella kissed his hand, and let one farewell drop, for the Padre and Antonio to divide between them. Antonio, however, appropriated no part of it to himself; he pulled off his cap exclusively to the padre, without even looking at Laurella. But after they had turned their backs he let his eyes travel but a short way with the padre, as he went toiling over the deep bed of small loose stones. He soon sent them after the maiden, who, turning to the right, had begun to climb the heights, holding one hand above her eyes to protect them from the scorching sun. Just before the path disappeared behind high walls she stopped, as if

to gather breath, and looked behind her. At her feet lay the marina; the rugged rocks rose high around her; the sea was shining in the rarest of its deep blue splendour. The scene was surely worth a moment's pause. But, as chance would have it, her eye, in glancing past Antonio's boat, met with Antonio's own, which had been following her as she climbed.

Each made a slight movement, as persons do who would excuse themselves for some mistake; and then, with her darkest look, the maiden went her way.

Hardly one hour had passed since noon, and yet for the last two Antonio had been sitting waiting on the bench before the fisher's tavern. He must have been very much preoccupied with something, for he jumped up every moment to step out into the sunshine and look carefully up and down the roads, which, parting right and left, lead to the only two little towns upon the island. He did not altogether trust the weather, he then said to the hostess of the Osteria; to be sure, it was clear enough, but he did not quite like that tint of sea and sky. Just so it had looked, he said, before that last awful storm, when the English family had been so nearly lost; surely she must remember it?

No, indeed, she said, she didn't.

Well, if the weather should happen to change before the night she was to think of him, he said.

"Have you many fine folk over there?" she asked him, after a while.

"They are only just beginning; as yet the season has been bad enough; those who came to bathe came late.

"The spring came late. Have you not been earning more than we at Capri?"

"Not enough to give me maccaroni twice a week, if I had had nothing but the boat—only a letter now and then to take to Naples, or a gentleman to row out into the open

sea, that he might fish. But you know I have an uncle who is rich: he owns more than one fine orange garden; and 'Tonino,' says he to me, 'while I live you shall not suffer want, and when I am gone you will find that I have taken care of you;' and so, with God's help, I got through the winter."

"Has he children, this uncle who is so rich?"

"No, he never married; he was long in foreign parts, and many a good piastre he has laid together. He is going to set up a great fishing business, and set me over it to see the rights of it."

"Why, then, you are a made man, Tonino!"

The young boatman shrugged his shoulders. "Every man has his own burthen," he said, starting up again to have another look at the weather, turning his eyes right and left, although he must have known that there can be no weather side but one.

"Let me fetch you another bottle," said the hostess; "your uncle can well afford to pay for it."

"Not more than one glass; it is a fiery wine you have in Capri, and my head is hot already."

"It does not heat the blood; you may drink as much of it as you like. And here is my husband coming, so you must sit awhile and talk to him."

And in fact, with his nets over his shoulder and his red cap upon his curly head, down came the comely padrone of the Osteria. He had been taking a dish of fish to that great lady, to set before the little curato. As soon as he caught sight of the young boatman, he began waving him a most cordial welcome, and came to sit beside him on the bench, chattering and asking questions. Just as his wife was bringing her second bottle of pure unadulterated Capri, they heard the crisp sand crunch, and Laurella was seen approaching from the left hand road to Anacapri. She nodded slightly in salutation; then stopped, and hesitated. Antonio sprang from his seat. "I must go," he said;

"it is a young Sorrento girl, who came over with the Signor curato in the morning. She has to get back to her sick mother before night."

"Well, well, time enough yet before night," observed the fisherman; "time enough to take a glass of wine. Wife, I say, another glass!"

"I thank you; I had rather not," and Laurella kept her distance.

"Fill the glasses, wife; fill them both, I say; she only wants a little pressing."

"Don't," interposed the lad. "It is a wilful head of her own she has; a saint could not persuade her to what she does not choose." And taking a hasty leave, he ran down to the boat, loosened the rope and stood waiting for Laurella. Again she bent her head to the hostess, and slowly approached the water, with lingering steps. She looked around on every side, as if in hopes of seeing some other passenger. But the marina was deserted. The fishermen were asleep, or rowing about the coast with rods or nets; a few women and children sat before their doors, spinning or sleeping. Such strangers as had come over in the morning were waiting for the cool of the evening to return. She had not time to look about her long; before she could prevent him, Antonio had seized her in his arms and carried her to the boat, as if she had been an infant. He leapt in after her, and with a stroke or two of his oar they were in deep water.

She had seated herself at the end of the boat, half turning her back to him, so that he could only see her profile. She wore a sterner look than ever; the low straight brow was shaded by her hair; her rounded lips were firmly closed; only the delicate nostril occasionally gave a wilful quiver. After they had gone on a while in silence she began to feel the scorching of the sun; and unloosening her bundle she threw the handkerchief over her head and began to make her dinner of the bread, for in Capri she had eaten nothing.

Antonio did not stand this long; he fetched out a couple of the oranges, with which the baskets had been filled in the morning. "Here is something to eat to your bread, Laurella," he said; "don't think I kept them for you; they had rolled out of the basket, and I only found them when I brought the baskets back to the boat."

"Eat them yourself; bread is enough for me."

"They are refreshing in this heat, and you have had to walk so far."

"They gave me a drink of water, and that refreshed me."

"As you please," he said, and let them drop into the basket.

Silence again. The sea was smooth as glass. Not a ripple was heard against the prow. Even the white sea-birds that roost among those caves pursued their prey with soundless flight.

"You might take the oranges to your mother," again commenced Tonino.

"We have oranges at home, and when they are done I can go and buy some more."

"Nay, take these to her, and give them to her with my compliments."

"She does not know you."

"You could tell her who I am."

"I do not know you either."

It was not for the first time that she denied him thus. One Sunday of last year, when that painter had first come to Sorrento, Antonio had chanced to be playing Boccia with some other young fellows in the little piazza by the chief street.

There, for the first time, had the painter caught sight of Laurella, who, with her pitcher on her head, had passed by without taking any notice of him. The Neapolitan, struck by her appearance, stood still and gazed after her, not heeding that he was standing in the very midst of the

game, which, with two steps, he might have cleared. A very ungentle ball came knocking against his shins, as a reminder that this was not the spot to choose for meditation. He looked round, as if in expectation of some excuse. But the young boatman who had thrown the ball stood silent among his friends, in an attitude of so much defiance that the stranger had found it more advisable to go his ways and avoid discussion. Still, this little encounter had been spoken of; particularly at the time when the painter had been pressing his suit to Laurella. "I do not even know him," she had said, indignantly, when the painter asked her whether it was for the sake of that uncourteous lad she now refused him? But she had heard that piece of gossip, and known Antonio well enough when she had met him since.

And now they sat together in this boat, like two most deadly enemies, while their hearts were beating fit to kill them. Antonio's usually so good-humoured face was heated scarlet; he struck the oars so sharply that the foam flew over to where Laurella sat, while his lips moved, as if muttering angry words. She pretended not to notice, wearing her most unconscious look, bending over the edge of the boat, and letting the cool water pass between her fingers. Then she threw off her handkerchief again and began to smooth her hair, as though she had been alone. Only her eyebrows twitched, and she held up her wet hands in vain attempts to cool her burning cheeks.

Now they were well out into the open sea. The island was far behind, and the coast before them lay yet distant in the hot haze. Not a sail was within sight, far or near; not even a passing gull to break the stillness. Antonio looked all round, evidently ripening some hasty resolution. The colour faded suddenly from his cheek, and he dropped his oars. Laurella looked round involuntarily; fearless, but yet attentive.

"I must make an end of this," the young fellow burst

forth. "It has lasted too long already. I only wonder that it has not killed me! You say you do not know me? And all this time you must have seen me pass you like a madman, my whole heart full of what I had to tell you, and then you only made your crossest mouth and turned your back upon me."

"What had I to say to you?" she curtly said. "I may have seen that you were inclined to meddle with me, but I do not choose to be on people's wicked tongues for nothing. I do not mean to have you for a husband. Neither you, nor any other."

"Nor any other? So will you not always say! You say so now because you would not have that painter. Bah! you were but a child! You will feel lonely enough yet some day; and then, wild as you are, you will take the next best who comes to hand."

"Who knows? Which of us can see the future? It may be that I change my mind. What is that to you?"

"What is it to me?" he flew out, starting to his feet, while the small boat leapt and danced. "What is it to me, you say? You know well enough! I tell you that man shall perish miserably to whom you shall prove kinder than you have been to me!"

"And to you, what did I ever promise? Am I to blame if you be mad? What right have you to me?"

"Ah! I know," he cried, "my right is written nowhere. It has not been put in Latin by any lawyer, nor stamped with any seal. But this I feel; I have just the right to you I have to heaven if I die an honest Christian. Do you think I could look on and see you go to church with another man, and see the girls go by and shrug their shoulders at me?"

"You can do as you please. I am not going to let myself be frightened by all those threats. I also mean to do as I please."

"You shall not say so long!" and his whole frame shook

with passion. "I am not the man to let my whole life be spoiled by a stubborn wench like you! You are in my power here, remember, and may be made to do my bidding."

She could not repress a start, but her eyes flashed bravely on him.

"You may kill me, if you dare," she said slowly.

"I do nothing by halves," he said, and his voice sounded choked and hoarse. "There is room for us both in the sea. I cannot help thee, child"—he spoke the last words dreamily, almost pitifully—"but we must both go down together, both at once, and now!" he shouted, and snatched her in his arms. But at the same moment he drew back his right hand; the blood gushed out—she had bitten him fiercely.

"Ha! can I be made to do your bidding?" she cried, and thrust him from her with one sudden movement. "Am I here in your power?" and she leapt into the sea, and sank.

She rose again directly; her scanty skirts clung close, her long hair, loosened by the waves, hung heavy about her neck. She struck out valiantly, and, without uttering a sound, she began to swim steadily from the boat towards the shore.

With senses maimed by sudden terror, he stood, with outstretched neck, looking after her, his eyes fixed, as though they had just been witness to a miracle. Then, giving himself a shake, he pounced upon his oars and began rowing after her with all the strength he had, while all the time the bottom of the boat was reddening fast with the blood that kept streaming from his hand.

Rapidly as she swam, he was at her side in a moment. "For the love of our most Holy Virgin," he cried, "get into the boat! I have been a madman! God alone can tell what so suddenly darkened my brain. It came upon me like a flash of lightning, and set me all on fire. I knew not what I did or said. I do not even ask you to forgive

me, Laurella, only to come into the boat again, and not to risk your life!"

She swam on, as though she had not heard him.

"You can never swim to land. I tell you, it is two miles off. Think upon your mother! If you should come to grief I should die of horror."

She measured the distance with her eye, and then, without answering him one word, she swam up to the boat, and laid her hands upon the edge; he rose to help her in. As the boat tilted over to one side, with the young girl's weight, his jacket, that was lying on the bench, slipped into the water. Agile as she was she swung herself on board without assistance, and gained her former seat. As soon as he saw that she was safe, he took to his oars again, while she began quietly wringing out her dripping clothes and shaking the water from her hair. As her eyes fell upon the bottom of the boat and saw the blood she gave a quick look at the hand, which held the oar as if it had been unhurt.

"Take this," she said, and held out her pocket-handkerchief. He shook his head, and went on rowing. After a time she rose, and stepping up to him she bound the handkerchief firmly round the wound, which was very deep. Then, heedless of his endeavours to prevent her, she took an oar and, seating herself opposite him, she began to row with steady strokes, keeping her eyes from looking towards him—fixed upon the oar that was scarlet with his blood. Both were pale and silent. As they drew near land such fishermen as they met began shouting after Antonio, and jibing at Laurella, but neither of them moved an eyelid or spoke one word.

The sun stood yet high over Procida when they landed at the Marina. Laurella shook out her petticoat, now nearly dry, and jumped on shore. The old spinning woman, who, in the morning, had seen them start, was still upon her terrace. She called down: "What is that upon your hand, Tonino? Jesus Christ! the boat is full of blood!"

"It is nothing, Commare," the young fellow replied. "I tore my hand against a nail that was sticking out too far; it will be well to-morrow. It is only this confounded ready blood of mine, that always makes a thing look worse than needful."

"Let me come and bind it up, Comparello. Stop one moment, I will go and fetch the herbs, and come to you directly."

"Never trouble yourself, Commare. It has been dressed already; to-morrow morning it will be all over and forgotten. I have a healthy skin, that heals directly."

"Addio!" said Laurella, turning to the path that goes winding up the cliffs. "Good-night!" he answered, without looking at her; and then, taking his oars and baskets from the boat and climbing up the small stone stairs, he went into his own hut.

He was alone in his two little rooms, and began to pace them up and down. Cooler than upon the dead calm sea, the breeze blew fresh through the small unglazed windows, which were only to be closed with wooden shutters. The solitude was soothing to him. He stopped before the little image of the Virgin, devoutly gazing upon the glory round the head (made of stars cut out in silver paper). But he did not want to pray. What reason had he to pray, now that he had lost all he had ever hoped for?

And this day appeared to last for ever. He did so long for night! for he was weary, and more exhausted by the loss of blood than he would have cared to own. His hand was very sore. Seating himself upon a little stool, he untied the handkerchief that bound it. The blood, so long repressed, gushed out again. All round the wound the hand was swollen high.

He washed it carefully, cooling it in the water; then he clearly saw the marks of Laurella's teeth.

"She was right," he said.—"I was a brute and deserved

no better. I will send her back the handkerchief by Giuseppe to-morrow. Never shall she set eyes on me again." And he washed the handkerchief with greatest care, and spread it out in the sun to dry.

And having bound up his hand again, as well as he could manage with his teeth and his left hand, he threw himself upon his bed and closed his eyes.

He was soon waked up from a sort of slumber by the rays of the bright moonlight, and also by the pain of his hand. He had just risen for more cold water to soothe its throbbings, when he heard the sound of some one at his door. "Who is there?" he cried, and went to open it: Laurella stood before him.

She came in without a question, took off the handkerchief she had tied over her head and placed her little basket upon the table; then she drew a deep breath.

"You are come to fetch your handkerchief," he said. "You need not have taken that trouble: in the morning I would have asked Giuseppe to take it to you."

"It is not the handkerchief," she said quickly; "I have been up among the hills to gather herbs to stop the blood; see here." And she lifted the lid of her little basket.

"Too much trouble," he said, not in bitterness—"far too much trouble; I am better, much better; but if I were worse it would be no more than I deserve. Why did you come at such a time? If any one should see you. You know how they talk! Even when they don't know what they are saying."

"I care for no one's talk," she said passionately: "I came to see your hand and put the herbs upon it; you cannot do it with your left."

"It is not worth while, I tell you."

"Let me see it, then, if I am to believe you."

She took his hand, that was not able to prevent her, and unbound the linen. When she saw the swelling she shuddered and gave a cry: "Jesus Maria!"

"It is a little swollen," he said; "it will be over in four-and-twenty hours."

She shook her head. "It will certainly be a week before you can go to sea."

"More likely a day or two, and if not, what matters?"

She had fetched a basin, and began carefully washing out the wound, which he suffered passively, like a child. She then laid on the healing leaves, which at once relieved the burning pain, and finally bound it up with the linen she had brought with her.

When it was done "I thank you," he said; "and now, if you would do me one more kindness, forgive the madness that came over me, forget all I said, and did. I cannot tell how it came to pass; certainly it was not your fault, not yours. And never shall you hear from me again one word to vex you."

She interrupted him: "It is I who have to beg your pardon. I should have spoken differently. I might have explained it better, and not enraged you with my sullen ways. And now that bite——"

"It was in self-defence—it was high time to bring me to my senses. As I said before, it is nothing at all to signify. Do not talk of being forgiven; you only did me good, and I thank you for it. And now here is your handkerchief; take it with you."

He held it to her, but yet she lingered, hesitated, and appeared to have some inward struggle. At length she said, "You have lost your jacket, and by my fault; and I know that all the money for the oranges was in it. I did not think of this till afterwards. I cannot replace it now, we have not so much at home—or if we had, it would be Mother's—but this I have, this silver cross. That painter left it on the table the day he came for the last time—I have never looked at it all this while, and do not care to keep it in my box. If you were to sell it—it must be worth a few piastres, Mother says—it might make up the money

you have lost; and if not quite, I could earn the rest by spinning at night, when Mother is asleep."

"Nothing will make me take it," he said shortly, pushing away the bright new cross, which she had taken from her pocket.

"You must," she said. "How can you tell how long your hand may keep you from your work? There it lies, and nothing can make me so much as look at it again."

"Drop it in the sea, then."

"It is no present I want to make you, it is no more than is your due, it is only fair."

"Nothing from you can be due to me, and hereafter when we chance to meet, if you would do me a kindness, I beg you not to look my way. It would make me feel you were thinking of what I have done. And now good-night, and let this be the last word said."

She laid the handkerchief in the basket, and also the cross, and closed the lid. But when he looked into her face, he started—great heavy drops were rolling down her cheeks; she let them flow unheeded.

"Maria Santissima!" he cried. "Are you ill? You are trembling from head to foot!"

"It is nothing," she said; "I must go home," and with unsteady steps she was moving to the door when suddenly a passion of weeping overcame her, and leaning her brow against the wall she fell into a fit of bitter sobbing. Before he could go to her, she turned upon him suddenly and fell upon his neck.

"I cannot bear it," she cried, clinging to him as a dying thing to life—"I cannot bear it, I cannot let you speak so kindly and bid me go, with all this on my conscience. Beat me! trample on me, curse me! Or if it can be that you love me still after all I have done to you take me and keep me, and do with me as you please; only do not send me so away!" She could say no more for sobbing.

Speechless, he held her a while in his arms. "If I can

love you still!" he cried at last. "Holy mother of God! Do you think that all my best heart's blood has gone from me, through that little wound? Don't you hear it hammering now, as though it would burst my breast and go to you? But if you say this to try me, or because you pity me, I can forget it—you are not to think you owe me this, because you know what I have suffered for you."

"No!" she said very resolutely, looking up from his shoulder into his face with her tearful eyes; "it is because I love you; and let me tell you it was because I always feared to love you that I was so cross. I will be so different now—I never could bear again to pass you in the street without one look. And lest you should ever feel a doubt, I will kiss you, that you may say, 'She kissed me,' and Laurella kisses no man but her husband."

She kissed him thrice, and, escaping from his arms: "And now good-night, *amor mio, cara vita mia!*" she said. "Lie down to sleep, and let your hand get well. Do not come with me; I am afraid of no man, save of you alone."

And so she slipped out and soon disappeared in the shadow of the wall.

He remained standing by the window, gazing far out over the calm sea, while all the stars in heaven appeared to flit before his eyes.

The next time the little curato sat in his confessional he sat smiling to himself: Laurella had just risen from her knees after a very long confession.

"Who would have thought it," he said musingly—"that the Lord would so soon have taken pity upon that wayward little heart? And I had been reproaching myself for not having adjured more sternly that ill demon of perversity. Our eyes are but short-sighted to see the ways of Heaven!"

"Well, may God bless her, I say! and let me live to go to sea with Laurella's eldest born, rowing me in his father's place! Ah, well, indeed! L'Arrabiata!"

HERMANN SUDERMANN

(1857–1928)

AUTUMN

(Translated by LUDWIG LEWISOHN)

I

IT was on a sunny afternoon in October. Human masses streamed through the alleys of the *Tiergarten*. With the desperate passion of an ageing woman who feels herself about to be deserted the giant city received the last caresses of summer. A dotted throng that was not unlike the chaos of the *Champs Élysées*, filled the broad, grey road that leads to Charlottenburg.

Berlin, which cannot compete with any other great European city as far as the luxury of vehicular traffic is concerned, seemed to have sent out to-day all it possessed in that kind. The weather was too beautiful for closed *coupés*, and hence the comfortable family landau was most in evidence. Only now and then did an elegant victoria glide along, or an aristocratic four-in-hand demand the respectful yielding of the crowd.

A dog-cart of dark yellow, drawn by a magnificent trotter, attracted the attention of experts. The noble animal, which seemed to feel the security of the guiding hand, leaned, snorting, upon its bit. With far out-reaching hind legs it flew along, holding its neck moveless, as became a scion of its race.

The man who drove was sinewy, tall, about forty, with

clear, grey eyes, sharply cut profile, and a close-clipped moustache. In his thin, brownish cheeks were several deep scars, and between the straight, narrow brows could be seen two salient furrows.

His attire—an asphalt-grey, thick-seamed overcoat, a coloured shirt and red gloves—did not deny the sportsman. His legs, which pressed against the footboard, were clad in tight, yellow riding-boots.

Many people saluted him. He returned their salutations with that careless courtesy which belongs to those who know themselves to have transcended the judgment of men.

If one of his acquaintances happened to be accompanied by a lady, he bowed deeply and respectfully, but without giving the ladies in question a single glance.

People looked after him and mentioned his name: Baron von Stueckrath.

Ah, that fellow . . .

And they looked around once more.

At the square of the *Great Star* he turned to the left, drove along the river, passed the well-known resort called simply *The Tents*, and stopped not far from the building of the general staff of the army and drew up before a large, distinguished house with a fenced front garden and cast-iron gate to the driveway.

He threw the reins to the groom, who sat statuesquely behind him, and said, "Drive home."

Jumping from the cart, he observed the handle of the scraper sticking in the top of one of his boots. He drew it out, threw it on the seat, and entered the house.

The janitor, an old acquaintance, greeted him with the servile intimacy of the tip-expecting tribe.

On the second floor he stopped and pulled the bell whose glass knob glittered above a neat brass plate.

"Ludovika Kraissl," was engraved upon it.

A maid, clad with prim propriety in a white apron and white lace cap, opened the door.

He entered and handed her his hat.

"Is Madame at home?"

"No, sir."

He looked at her through half-closed lids, and observed how her milk-white little madonna's face flushed to the roots of her blonde hair.

"Where did she go?"

"Madame meant to go to the dressmaker," the girl stuttered, "and to make some purchases."

She avoided his eyes. She had been in service only three months and had not yet perfected herself in lying.

He whistled a tune between his set teeth and entered the drawing-room.

A penetrating perfume streamed forth.

"Open the window, Meta."

She passed noiselessly through the room and executed his command.

Frowning, he looked about him. The empty pomp of the light woman offended his taste. The creature who lived here had a gift for filling every corner with banal and tasteless trivialities.

When he had turned over the flat to her it had been a charming little place, full of delicate tints and the simple lines of Louis Seize furniture. In a few years she had made a junk-shop of it.

"Would you care for tea, sir, or anything else?" the girl asked.

"No, thank you. Pull off my boots, Meta. I'll change my dress and then go out again."

Modestly, almost humbly, she bowed before him and set his spurred foot gently on her lap. Then she loosened the top straps. He let his glance rest, well pleased, upon her smooth, silvery blonde hair.

How would it work if he sent his mistress packing and installed this girl in her place?

But he immediately abandoned the thought. He had

seen the thing done by some of his friends. In a single year the chastest and most modest servant girl was so thoroughly corrupted that she had to be driven into the streets.

"We men seem to emit a pestilential air," he reflected, "that corrupts every woman."

"Or at least men of my kind," he added carefully.

"Have you any other wishes, sir?" asked the girl, daintily wiping her hands on her apron.

"No, thank you."

She turned to the door.

"One thing more, Meta. When did Madame say she would be back?"

Her face was again mantled with blood.

"She didn't say anything definite. I was to make her excuses. She intended to return home by evening, at all events."

He nodded and the girl went with a sigh of relief, gently closing the door behind her.

He continued to whistle, and looked up at a hanging lamp, which defined itself against the window niche by means of a wreath of gay artificial flowers.

In this hanging lamp, which hung there unnoticed and unreachable from the floor, he had, a year ago, quite by accident, discovered a store of love letters. His mistress had concealed them there, since she evidently did not even consider the secret drawer of her desk a sufficiently safe repository.

He had carefully kept the secret of the lamp to himself, and had only fed his grim humour from time to time by observing the changes of her heart by means of added missives. In this way he had been able to observe the number of his excellent friends with whom she deceived him.

Thus his contempt for mankind assumed monstrous proportions, but this contempt was the one emotional luxury which his egoism was still capable of.

He grasped a chair and seemed, for a moment, about to mount to the lamp to inspect her latest history. But he let his hand fall. After all, it was indifferent with whom she was unfaithful to-day. . . .

And he was tired. A bad day's work lay behind him. A three-year-old full-blooded horse, recently imported from Hull, had proven itself abnormally sensitive and had brought him to the verge of despair by its fearfulness and its moods. He had exercised it for hours, and had only succeeded in making the animal more nervous than before. Great sums were at stake if the fault should prove constitutional and not curable.

He felt the impulse to share his worries with some one, but he knew of no one. From the point of view of Miss Ludi's naïve selfishness, it was simply his duty to be successful. She didn't care for the troublesome details. At his club, again, each one was warily guarding his own interests. Hence it was necessary there to speak carefully, since an inadvertent expression might affect general opinion.

He almost felt impelled to call in the maid and speak to her of his worries.

Then his own softness annoyed him.

It was his wont to pass through life in lordly isolation and to astonish the world by his successes. That was all he needed.

Yawning he stretched himself out on the *chaise longue*. Time dragged.

Three hours would pass until Ludi's probable return. He was so accustomed to the woman's society that he almost longed for her. Her idle chatter helped him. Her little tricks refreshed him. But the most important point was this: she was no trouble. He could caress her or beat her, call to her and drive her from him like a little dog. He could let her feel the full measure of his contempt, and she would not move a muscle. She was used to nothing else.

He passed two or three hours daily in her company, for time had to be killed somehow. Sometimes, too, he took her to the circus or the theatre. He had long broken with the families of his acquaintance and could appear in public with light women.

And yet he felt a sharp revulsion at the atmosphere that surrounded him. A strange discomfort invaded his soul in her presence. He didn't feel degraded. He knew her to be a harlot. But that was what he wanted. None but such an one would permit herself to be so treated. It was rather a disguised discouragement that held him captive.

Was life to pass thus unto the very end? Was life worth living, if it offered a favourite of fortune, a master of his will and of his actions, nothing better than this?

"Surely I have the spleen," he said to himself, sprang up, and went into the next room to change his clothes. He had a wardrobe in Ludi's dressing-room in order to be able to go out from here in the evening unrestrainedly.

It was near four o'clock.

The sun laughed through the window. Its light was deep purple, changing gradually to violet. Masses of leaves, red as rust, gleamed over from the *Tiergarten*. The figure of Victory upon the triumphal column towered toward heaven like a mighty flame.

He felt an impulse to wander through the alleys of the park idly and aimlessly, at most to give a coin to a begging child.

He left the house and went past the Moltke monument and the winding ways that lead to the Charlottenburg road.

The ground exhaled the sweetish odour of decaying plants. Rustling heaps of leaves, which the breezes of noon had swept together, flew apart under his tread. The wester-

ing sun threw red splotches of light on the faint green of the tree trunks that exuded their moisture in long streaks.

Here it was lonely. Only beyond the great road, whose many-coloured pageant passed by him like a kinematograph, did he hear again in the alleys the sounds of children's voices, song and laughter.

In the neighbourhood of the *Rousseau Island* he met a gentleman whom he knew and who had been a friend of his youth. Stout of form, his round face surrounded by a close-clipped beard, he wandered along, leading two little girls in red, while a boy in a blue sailor suit rode ahead, herald-like, on his father's walking-stick.

The two men bowed to each other coolly, but without ill-will. They were simply estranged. The busy servant of the State and father of a family was scarcely to be found in those circles where the daily work consists in riding and betting and gambling.

Stueckrath sat down on a bench and gazed after the group. The little red frocks gleamed through the bushes, and Papa's admonishing and restraining voice was to be heard above the noise of the boy who made a trumpet of his hollow hand.

"Is that the way happiness looks?" he asked himself. "Can a man of energy and action find satisfaction in these banal domesticities?"

And, strangely enough, these fathers of families, men who serve the State and society, who occupy high offices, make important inventions, and write good books—these men have red cheeks and laughing eyes. They do not look as though the burden which they carry squeezes the breath of life out of them. They get ahead, in spite of the childish hands that cling to their coats, in spite of the trivialities with which they pass their hours of leisure.

An indeterminate feeling of envy bored into his soul. He fought it down and went on, right into the throng that

filled the footpaths of the *Tiergarten*. Groups of ladies from the west end went by him in rustling gowns of black. He did not know them, and did not wish to know them.

Here, too, he recognised fewer of the men. The financiers who have made this quarter their own appear but rarely at the races.

Accompanying carriages kept pace with the promenaders in order to explain and excuse their unusual exertion. For in this world the continued absence of one's carriage may well shake one's credit.

The trumpeting motor-cars whirred by with gleaming brasses. Of the beautiful women in them little could be seen in the swift gleams. It was the haste of a new age that does not even find time to display its vanity.

Upon the windows of the villas and palaces opposite lay the iridescent glow of the evening sun. The façades took on purple colours, and the decaying masses of vines that weighed heavily upon the fences seemed to glow and shine from within with the very phosphorescence of decay.

Flooded by this light, a slender, abnormally tall girl came into Stueckrath's field of vision. She led by the arm an aged lady, who hobbled with difficulty along the pebbly path. A closed carriage with escutcheon and coronet followed the two slowly.

He stopped short. An involuntary movement had passed through his body, an impulse to turn off into one of the side paths. But he conquered himself at once, and looked straight at the approaching ladies.

Like a mere line of blackness, thin of limb and waist, attired with nun-like austerity in garments that hung as if withering upon her, she stood against the background of autumnal splendour.

Now she recognised him, too. A sudden redness that at once gave way to lifeless pallor flashed across her delicate, stern face.

They looked straight into each other's eyes.

He bowed deeply. She smiled with an effort at indifference.

"And so she is faded, too," he thought. To be sure, her face still bore the stamp of a simple and severe beauty, but time and grief had dealt ungently with it. The lips were pale and anæmic, two or three folds, sharp as if made with a knife, surrounded them. About the eyes, whose soft and lambent light of other days had turned into a hard and troubled sharpness, spread concentric rings, united by a network of veins and wrinkles.

He stood still, lost in thought, and looked after her.

She still trod the earth like a queen, but her outline was detestable.

Only hopelessness bears and attires itself thus.

He calculated. She must be thirty-six. Thirteen years ago he had known her and—loved her? Perhaps . . .

At least he had left her the evening before their formal betrothal was to take place because her father had dared to remark upon his way of life.

He loved his personal liberty more than his beautiful and wealthy betrothed, who clung to him with every fibre of her delicate and noble soul. One word from her, had it been but a word of farewell, would have recalled him. That word remained unspoken.

Thus her life's happiness had been wrecked. Perhaps his, too. What did it matter?

Since then he had nothing but contempt for the daughters of good families. Other women were less exacting; they did not attempt to circumscribe his freedom.

He gazed after her long. Now groups of other pedestrians intervened; now her form reappeared sharp and narrow against the trees. From time to time she stooped lovingly toward the old lady, who, as is the wont of aged people, trod eagerly and fearfully.

This fragile heap of bones, with the dull eyes and the sharp voice—he remembered the voice well: it had had

part in his decision. This strange, unsympathetic, suspicious old woman, he would have had to call "Mother."

What madness! What hypocrisy!

And yet his hunger for happiness, which had not yet died, reminded him of all that might have been.

A sea of warm, tender and unselfish love would have flooded him and fructified and vivified the desert of his soul. And instead of becoming withered and embittered, she would have blossomed at his side more richly from day to day.

Now it was too late. A long, thin, wretched little creature—she went her way and was soon lost in the distance.

But there clung to his soul the yearning for a woman—one who had more of womanliness than its name and its body, more than the harlot whom he kept because he was too slothful to drive her from him.

He sought the depths of his memory. His life had been rich in gallant adventures. Many a full-blooded young woman had thrown herself at him, and had again vanished from his life under the compulsion of his growing coldness.

He loved his liberty. Even an unlawful relation felt like a fetter so soon as it demanded any sacrifice of time or interests. Also, he did not like to give less than he received. For, since the passing of his unscrupulous youth, he had not cared to receive the gift of a human destiny only to throw it aside as his whim demanded.

And therefore his life had grown quiet during the last few years.

He thought of one of his last loves . . . the very last . . . and smiled.

The image of a delicately plump, brunette little woman, with dreamy eyes and delicious little curls around her ears, rose up before him. She dwelt in his memory as she had seemed to him: modest, soulful, all ecstatic yielding and charming simple-heartedness.

She did not belong to society. He had met her at a dinner given by a financial magnate. She was the wife of an upper clerk who was well respected in the business world. With adoring curiosity, she peeped into the great strange world, whose doors opened to her for the first time.

He took her to the table, was vastly entertained by the lack of sophistication with which she received all these new impressions, and smilingly accepted the undisguised adoration with which she regarded him in his character of a famous horseman and rake.

He flirted with her a bit, and that turned her head completely. In lonely dreams her yearning for elegant and phantastic sin had grown to enormity. She was now so wholly and irresistibly intoxicated that he received next morning a deliciously scribbled note in which she begged him for a secret meeting—somewhere in the neighbourhood of the *Arkona Place* or *Weinmeisterstrasse*, regions as unknown to him as the North Cape or Yokohama.

Two or three meetings followed. She appeared, modest, anxious, and in love, a bunch of violets for his button-hole in her hand, and some surprise for her husband in her pocket.

Then the affair began to bore him and he refused an appointment.

One evening, during the last days of November, she appeared, thickly veiled, in his dwelling, and sank sobbing upon his breast. She could not live without seeing him; she was half crazed with longing; he was to do with her what he would. He consoled her, warmed her, and kissed the melting snow from her hair. But when, in his joy at what he considered the full possession of a jewel, his tenderness went beyond hers, her conscience smote her. She was an honest woman. Horror and shame would drive her into her grave if she went hence an adulteress. He must have pity on her, and be content with her pure adoration.

He had the requisite pity, dismissed her with a paternal

kiss upon her forehead, but at the same time ordered his servant to admit her no more.

Then came two or three letters. In her agony over the thought of losing him she was willing to break down the last reserve. But he did not answer the letters.

At the same time the thought came to him of going up the Nile in a *dahabiyeh*. He was bored and had a cold.

On the evening of his departure he found her waiting in his rooms.

"What do you want?"

"Take me along."

"How do you know?"

"Take me along."

She said nothing else.

The necessity of comforting her was clear. A thorough-going farewell was celebrated, with the understanding that it was a farewell for ever.

The pact had been kept. After his return and for two years more she had given no sign of life.

He now thought of this woman. He felt a poignant longing for the ripe sweetness of her oval face, the veiled depth of her voice. He desired once more to be embraced by her firm arms, to be kissed by her mad, hesitating lips.

Why had he dropped her? How could he have abandoned her so rudely?

The thought came into his head of looking her up now, in this very hour.

He had a dim recollection of the whereabouts of her dwelling. He could soon ascertain its exact situation.

Then again the problems of his racing stable came into his head. The thought of "Maidenhood," the newly purchased horse, worried him. He had staked much upon one throw. If he lost, it would take time to repair the damage.

Suddenly he found himself in a tobacconist's shop, looking

for her name in the directory. *Friedrich-Wilhelm Strasse* was the address. Quite near, as he had surmised.

He was not at loss for an excuse. Her husband must still be in his office at this hour. He would not be asked for any very strict accounting for his action. At worst there was an approaching riding festival, for which he could request her co-operation.

Perhaps she had forgotten him and would revenge herself for her humiliation. Perhaps she would be insulted and not even receive him. At best he must count upon coldness, bitter truths, and that appearance of hatred which injured love assumes.

What did it matter? She was a woman, after all.

The vestibule of the house was supported by pillars; its walls were ornately stuccoed; the floor was covered with imitation oriental rugs. It was the rented luxury with which the better middle-class loves to surround itself.

He ascended three flights of stairs.

An elderly servant in a blue apron regarded the stranger suspiciously.

He asked for her mistress.

She would see. Holding his card gingerly, she disappeared.

Now *he* would see. . . .

Then, as he bent forward, listening, he heard through the open door a cry—not of horrified surprise, but of triumph and jubilation, such a cry of sudden joy as only a long and hopeless and unrestrainable yearning can send forth.

He thought he had heard wrong, but the smiling face of the returning servant reassured him.

He was to be made welcome.

III

He entered. With outstretched hands, tears in her eyes, her face a-quiver with a vain attempt at equanimity—thus she came forward to meet him.

"There you are . . . there you are . . . you . . ."

Overwhelmed and put to shame by her forgiveness and her happiness, he stood before her in silence.

What could he have said to her that would not have sounded either coarse or trivial?

And she demanded neither explanation nor excuse.

He was here—that was enough for her.

As he let his glance rest upon her, he confessed that his mental image of her fell short of the present reality.

She had grown in soul and stature. Her features bore signs of power and restraint, and of a strong inner tension. Her eyes sought him with a steady light; in her bosom battled the pent-up joy.

She asked him to be seated.

"In that corner," she said, and led him to a tiny sofa covered with glittering, light-green silk, above which hung a withered palm-leaf fan.

"I have sat there so often," she went on, "so often, and have thought of you, always—always. You'll drink tea, won't you?"

He was about to refuse, but she interrupted him.

"Oh, but you must, you must. You can't refuse! It has been my dream all this time to drink tea with you here just once—just once. To serve you on this little table and hand you the basket with cakes! Do you see this little lacquer table, with the lovely birds of inlaid mother-of-pearl? I had that given to me last Christmas for the especial purpose of serving you tea on it. For I said to myself: 'He is accustomed to the highest elegance.' And you are here, and are going to refuse? No, no, that's impossible. I couldn't bear that."

And she flew to the door and called out her orders to the servant.

He regarded her in happy astonishment. In all her movements there was a rhythm of unconscious loveliness such as he had rarely seen in any woman. With simple,

unconscious elegance, her dress flowed about her taller figure, whose severe lines were softened by the womanly curves of her limbs.

And all that belonged to him.

He could command this radiant young body and this radiant young soul. All that was one hunger to be possessed by him.

"Bind her to yourself," cried his soul, "and build yourself a new happiness!"

Then she returned. She stopped a few paces from him, folded her hands under her chin, gazed at him wide-eyed and whispered: "There he is! There he is!"

He grew uncomfortable under this expense of passion.

"I should wager that I sit here with a foolish face," he thought.

"But now I'm going to be sensible," she went on, sitting down on a low stool that stood next to the sofa. "And while the tea is steeping you must tell me how things have gone with you all this long time. For it is a very long time since . . . Ah, a long time . . ."

It seemed to him that there was a reproach behind these words. He gave but a dry answer to her question, but threw the more warmth into his inquiries concerning her life.

She laughed and waved her hand.

"Oh, I!" she cried. "I have fared admirably. Why should I not? Life makes me as happy as though I were a child. Oh, I can always be happy. . . . That's characteristic of me. Nearly every day brings something new and usually something delightful. . . . And since I've been in love with you. . . . You mustn't take that for a banal declaration of passion, dear friend. . . . Just imagine you are merely my confidant, and that I'm telling you of my distant lover who takes little notice of a foolish woman like myself. But, then, that doesn't matter so long as I know that he is alive and can fear and pray for him; so long as

the same morning sun shines on us both. Why, do you know, it's a most delicious feeling, when the morning is fair and the sun golden and one may stand at the window and say: 'Thank God, it is a beautiful day for him.'"

He passed his hand over his forehead.

"It isn't possible," he thought. "Such things don't exist in this world."

And she went on, not thinking that perhaps he, too, would want to speak.

"I don't know whether many people have the good fortune to be as happy as I. But I am, thank God! And, do you know, the best part of it all, and the sunniest, I owe to you. For instance: Summer before last we went to Heligoland, last summer to Schwarzburg. . . . Do you know it? Isn't it beautiful? Well, for instance: I wake up; I open my eyes to the dawn. I get up softly, so as not to disturb my husband, and go on my bare feet to the window. Without, the wooded mountains lie dark and peaceful. There is a peace over it all that draws one's tears . . . it is so beautiful . . . and behind, on the horizon, there shines a broad path of gold. And the fir trees upon the highest peaks are sharply defined against the gold, like little men with many outstretched arms. And already the early piping of a few birds is heard. And I fold my hands and think: I wonder where he is. . . . And if he is asleep, has he fair dreams? Ah, if he were here and could see all this loveliness! And I think of *him* with such impassioned intensity that it is not hard to believe him here and able to see it all. And at last a chill comes up, for it is always cool in the mountains, as you know. . . . And then one slips back into bed, and is annoyed to think that one must sleep four hours more instead of being up and thinking of him. And when one wakes up for a second time, the sun throws its golden light into the windows, and the breakfast table is set on the balcony. And one's husband has been up quite a while, but waits patiently. And his dear, peaceful face,

is seen through the glass door. At such moments one's heart expands in gratitude to God who has made life so beautiful and one can hardly bear one's own happiness—and—there is the tea."

The elderly maid came in with a salver, which she placed on the piano, in order to set the little table properly. A beautiful napkin of damask silk lay ready. The lady of the house scolded jestingly. It would injure the polish of the piano, and what was her guest to think of such shiftlessness.

The maid went out.

She took up the tea-kettle, and asked in a voice full of bliss.

"Strong or weak, dear master?"

"Strong, please."

"One or two lumps of sugar?"

"Two lumps, please."

She passed him the cup with a certain solemnity.

"So this is the great moment, the pinnacle of all happiness as I have dreamed of it! Now, tell me yourself: Am I not to be envied? Whatever I wish is fulfilled. And, do you know, last year in Heligoland I had a curious experience. We capsized by the dunes and I fell into the water. As I lost consciousness, I thought that you were there and were saving me. Later, when I lay on the beach, I saw, of course, that it had been only a stupid old fisherman. But the feeling was so wonderful while it lasted that I almost felt like jumping into the water again. Speaking of water, do you take rum in your tea?"

He shook his head. Her chatter, which at first had enraptured him, began to fill him with sadness. He did not know how to respond. His youthfulness and flexibility of mind had passed from him long ago: he had long lost any inner cheerfulness.

And while she continued to chat, his thoughts wandered, like a horse, on their accustomed path on the road of his

daily worries. He thought of an unsatisfactory jockey, of the nervous horse.

What was this woman to him, after all?

"By the way," he heard her say, "I wanted to ask you whether 'Maidenhood' has arrived?"

He sat up sharply and stared at her. Surely he had heard wrong.

"What do you know about 'Maidenhood'?"

"But, my dear friend, do you suppose I haven't heard of your beautiful horse, by 'Blue Devil' out of 'Nina'? Now, do you see? I believe I know the grandparents, too. Anyhow, you are to be congratulated on your purchase. The English trackmen are bursting with envy. To judge by that, you ought to have an immense success."

"But, for heaven's sake, how do you know all this?"

"Dear me, didn't your purchase appear in all the sporting papers?"

"Do you read those papers?"

"Surely. You see, here is the last number of the *Spur*, and yonder is the bound copy of the *German Sporting News*."

"I see; but to what purpose?"

"Oh, I'm a sporting lady, dear master. I look upon the world of horses—is that the right expression?—with benevolent interest. I hope that isn't forbidden?"

"But you never told me a word about that before!"

She blushed a little and cast her eyes down.

"Oh, before, before. . . . That interest didn't come until later."

He understood and dared not understand.

"Don't look at me so," she besought him; "there's nothing very remarkable about it. I just said to myself: Well, if he doesn't want you, at least you can share his life from afar. That isn't immodest, is it? And then the race meets were the only occasions on which I could see you from afar. And whenever you yourself rode—oh, how my heart beat—fit to burst! And when you won, oh, how

proud I was! I could have cried out my secret for all the world to hear. And my poor husband's arm was always black and blue. I pinched him first in my anxiety and then in my joy."

"So your husband happily shares your enthusiasm?"

"Oh, at first he wasn't very willing. But then, he is so good, so good. And as I couldn't go to the races alone, why, he had just to go with me! And in the end he has become as great an enthusiast as I am. We can sit together for hours and discuss the tips. And he just admires you so—almost more than I. Oh, how happy he'd be to meet you here! You mustn't refuse him that pleasure. And now you're laughing at me. Shame on you!"

"I give you my word that nothing——"

"Oh, but you smiled. I saw you smile."

"Perhaps. But assuredly with no evil intention. And now you'll permit me to ask a serious question, won't you?"

"But surely!"

"Do you love your husband?"

"Why, of course I love him. You don't know him, or you wouldn't ask. How could I help it? We're like two children together. And I don't mean anything silly. We're like that in hours of grief, too. Sometimes when I look at him in his sleep—the kind, careworn forehead, the silent serious mouth—and when I think how faithfully and carefully he guides me, how his one dreaming and waking thought is for my happiness—why, then I kneel down and kiss his hands till he wakes up. Once he thought it was our little dog, and murmured 'Shoo, shoo!' Oh, how we laughed! And if you imagine that such a state of affairs can't be reconciled with my feeling for you, why, then you're quite wrong. *That* is upon an entirely different plane."

"And your life is happy?"

"Perfectly, perfectly."

Radiantly she folded her hands.

She did not suspect her position on the fearful edge of an abyss. She had not yet realised what his coming meant, nor how defenceless she was.

He had but to stretch out his arms and she would fly to him, ready to sacrifice her fate to his mood. And this time there would be no returning to that well-ordered content.

A dull feeling of responsibility arose in him and paralysed his will. Here was all that he needed in order to conquer a few years of new freshness and joy for the arid desert of his life. Here was the spring of life for which he was athirst. And he had not the courage to touch it with his lips.

IV

A silence ensued in which their mood threatened to darken and grow turbid.

Then he pulled himself together.

"You don't ask me why I came, dear friend."

She shrugged her shoulders and smiled.

"A moment's impulse—or loneliness. That's all."

"And a bit of remorse, don't you think so?"

"Remorse? For what? You have nothing with which to reproach yourself Was not our agreement made to be kept?"

"And yet I couldn't wholly avoid the feeling as if my unbroken silence must have left a sting in your soul which would embitter your memory of me."

Thoughtfully she stirred her tea.

"No," she said at last, "I'm not so foolish. The memory of you is a sacred one. If that were not so, how could I have gone on living? That time, to be sure, I wanted to take my life. I had determined on that before I came to you. For that one can leave the man with whom . . . I never thought that possible. . . . But one learns a good

deal—a good deal. . . . And now I'll tell you how it came to pass that I didn't take my life that night. When everything was over, and I stood in the street before your house, I said to myself: 'Now the river is all that is left.' In spite of rain and storm, I took an open cab and drove out to the *Tiergarten*. Wasn't the weather horrible! At the *Great Star* I left the cab and ran about in the muddy ways, weeping, weeping. I was blind with tears, and lost my way. I said to myself that I would die at six. There were still four minutes left. I asked a policeman the way to *Bellevue*, for I did remember that the river flows hard behind the castle. The policeman said: 'There it is. The hour is striking in the tower now.' And when I heard the clock strike, the thought came to me: 'Now my husband is coming home, tired and hungry, and I'm not there. If at least he wouldn't let his dinner get cold. But of course he will wait. He'd rather starve than eat without me. And he'll be frightened more and more as the hours pass. Then he'll run to the police. And next morning he'll be summoned by telegram to the morgue. There he'll break down helplessly and hopelessly and I won't be able to console him.' And when I saw that scene in my mind, I called out: 'Cab! cab!' But there was no cab. So I ran back to the *Great Star*, and jumped into the street-car, and rode home and rushed into his arms and cried my fill."

"And had your husband no questions to ask? Did he entertain no suspicion?"

"Oh, no, he knows me. I am taken that way sometimes. If anything moves or delights me deeply—a lovely child on the street—you see, I haven't any—or some glorious music, or sometimes only the park in spring and some white statue in the midst of the greenery. Oh, sometimes I seem to feel my very soul melt, and then he lays his cool, firm hand on my forehead and I am healed."

"And were you healed on that occasion, too?"

"Yes. I was calmed at once. 'Here,' I said to myself,

'is this dear, good man, to whom you can be kind. And as far as the other is concerned, why it was mere mad egoism to hope to have a share in his life. For to give love means, after all, to demand love. And what can a poor, super-sensitive thing like you mean to him? He has others. He need but stretch forth his hand, and the hearts of countesses and princesses are his!' "

"Dear God," he thought, and saw the image of the purchasable harlot, who was supposed to satisfy his heart's needs.

But she chatted on, and bit by bit built up for him the image of him which she had cherished during these two years. All the heroes of Byron, Poushkine, Spielhagen, and Scott melted into one glittering figure. There was no splendour of earth with which her generous imagination had not dowered him.

He listened with a melancholy smile, and thought: "Thank God, she doesn't know me. If I didn't take a bit of pleasure in my stable, the contrast would be too terrible to contemplate."

And there was nothing forward, nothing immodest, in this joyous enthusiasm. It was, in fact, as if he were a mere confidant, and she were singing a hymn in praise of her beloved.

And thus she spared him any feeling of shame.

But what was to happen now?

It went without saying that this visit must have consequences of some sort. It was her right to demand that he do not, for a second time, take her up and then fling her aside at the convenience of a given hour.

Almost timidly he asked after her thoughts of the future.

"Let's not speak of it. You won't come back, anyhow."

"How can you think . . ."

"Oh, no, you won't come back. And what is there here for you? Do you want to be adored by me? You spoiled gentlemen soon tire of that sort of thing. . . . Or would

you like to converse with my husband? That wouldn't amuse you. He's a very silent man and his reserve thaws only when he is alone with me. . . . But it doesn't matter. . . . You have been here. And the memory of this hour will always be dear and precious to me. Now, I have something more in which my soul can take pleasure."

A muffled pain stirred in him. He felt impelled to throw himself at her feet and bury his head in her lap. But he respected the majesty of her happiness.

"And if I myself desired . . ."

That was all he said; all he dared to say. The sudden glory in her face commanded his silence. Under the prudence which his long experience dictated, his mood grew calmer.

But she had understood him.

In silent blessedness, she leaned her head against the wall. Then she whispered, with closed eyes. "It is well that you said no more. I might grow bold and revive hopes that are dead. But if you . . ."

She raised her eyes to his. A complete surrender to his will lay in her glance.

Then she raised her head with a listening gesture.

"My husband," she said, after she had fought down a slight involuntary fright, and said it with sincere joy.

Three glowing fingers barely touched his. Then she hastened to the door.

"Guess who is here," she called out; "guess!"

On the threshold appeared a sturdy man of middle size and middle age. His round, blonde beard came to a greyish point beneath the chin. His thin cheeks were yellow, but with no unhealthful hue. His quiet, friendly eyes gleamed behind glasses that sat a trifle too far down his nose, so that in speaking his head was slightly thrown back and his lids drawn.

With quiet astonishment he regarded the elegant stranger. Coming nearer, however, he recognised him at once in

spite of the twilight, and, a little confused with pl stretched out his hand.

Upon his tired, peaceful features there was no any sense of strangeness, any desire for an explanatio . Stueckrath realised that toward so simple a natu would have been out of place, and simply declared had desired to renew an acquaintance which he had remembered with much pleasure.

"I don't want to speak of myself, Baron," th replied, "but you probably scarcely realise what p you are giving my wife."

And he nodded down at her who stood beside apparently unconcerned except for her wifely joy.

A few friendly words were exchanged. Further was really superfluous, since the man's unassailable cence demanded no caution. But Stueckrath was too pleased with him to let him feel his insignificance immediate departure.

Hence he sat a little longer, told of his latest pur and was shamed by the satisfaction with which th rehearsed the history of his stable.

He did not neglect the courtesy of asking them b call on him, and took his leave, accompanied by the to the door. He could not decide which of the two p his hand more warmly.

When in the darkness of the lower hall he looked up he saw two faces which gazed after him with ge feeling.

Out amid the common noises of the street he ha feeling as though he had returned from some far isla alien seas into the wonted current of life.

He shuddered at the thought of what lay before him Then he went toward the *Tiergarten*.

A red afterglow eddied amid the trees. In th gleamed a harmony of delicate blue tints, shading